

# SECRET SERVICE

## OLD AND YOUNG KING BRADY, DETECTIVES.

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Price 5 Cents.

# THE BRADYS IN BADTOWN!

## OR, THE FIGHT FOR A GOLD MINE.

*By A NEW-YORK DETECTIVE.*



"Halt!" cried Old King Brady, whipping out his revolver and seizing the horse by the bridle. At the same moment two other toughs rode into the Howling Coyote.



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(Continued on page 3 of cover.)



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## THE BRADYS IN BADTOWN;

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### CHAPTER I.

#### THE HOLD-UP ON THE DOME ROCK TRAIL.

"Yaas," drawled Dirty James, the driver of the Nortons stage coach. "Yaas, neighbor, what you say is gospel truth, but I advise yer not to say it when yer get to Badtown if yer know when yer well off."

The fussy gentleman on the driver's seat fidgeted nervously.

"Why, bless my heart, my good man, I'm not saying anything against your country!" he exclaimed. "I merely remarked that it was hot—that's all."

"You said 'ez hot ez a glassmaker's melting pot,' that's what yer said, Mister," replied Dirty James. "We don't allow no such talk ez that out hyar in Arizona."

"Oh, beg pardon. I didn't mean to offend, but the thermometer must stand at least 115 degrees in the shade."

"It don't make no difference what it stands at. Yer don't know because yer hain't got one, an' the guessin' business don't go."

"Very sorry. Very sorry I offended," said the fussy man, twisting nervously in his seat.

"Not that I care," drawled Dirty James, paying no at-

tention to his apology. "It don't make no difference to me, but the Badtown boys don't take kindly to dude talk, no they don't. Ef yew was to call one of 'em your 'good man,' same ez yew called me jest now, I kinder think yew would stand a fair chance of getting plugged with a lead pill. Ha! Ha! Ha!"

"Bless my soul!" cried the fussy man; "are they so particular as all that?"

"In Badtown, yes. I hain't. I meet all kinds and don't keer a blame what they say to me. But the Badtown boys is particklar, and thar's no denying it. Take my advice and go slow with that phonograph of yours."

"With what?" demanded the fussy man. "I don't know what you mean. I have no phonograph, my good—I mean my dear sir."

"Ah, go on! You know. I mean that taking machine of yourn. Pertater trap, if you like it better; your big mouth, if you want it out plain."

"Bless my heart, what language!" gasped the fussy gentleman, drawing himself as far away from Dirty James as the narrow seat would permit.

After that, he made no attempt to talk, but clung nervously to the coach seat and watched the black clouds gathering in the northeast.



There were three inside passengers, including one woman. There were also two others on the outside.

The Nortons coach was a little differently arranged from the ordinary western stage. It had a high seat on the roof, with an immense green umbrella over it to shield the passengers who might occupy it, from the sun. Anyone who knows southwestern Arizona knows how necessary this is.

This is undoubtedly the hottest country in the United States.

They used to tell a story of a very wicked soldier stationed at Fort Yuma, who died and went to —, well, to a place generally supposed to be very warm. Two weeks later the soldier's ghost appeared to his tent mate and demanded his overcoat, declaring that, having been accustomed to the heat of Fort Yuma, in his present place of residence he was suffering from the cold.

On this occasion there were two men seated under the green umbrella on top of the stage.

One was tall, elderly and of marked appearance. The other was a good-looking fellow, dressed in up-to-date style, which his companion certainly was not. In fact, the old man's clothes were decidedly behind the times. They looked as if they might have been made for him somewhere about 1840.

He wore a long-tailed blue coat, which buttoned tight about his waist, with a row of shining brass buttons. He had on a high stand-up collar and an old-fashioned "stock." His hat was of white felt and as big as a cowboy's. This last was quite the thing in his present situation, by the way.

Dirty James, the driver, wore one of exactly the same style.

But enough of long introductions.

We may as well mention right here that these two men under the umbrella were none other than the far-famed Bradys, the crack detectives of the United States. New York is their home, although their business takes them all over the world.

What had brought them away out into the southwest corner of Arizona?

That we shall now proceed to show.

"If that party don't learn to keep his mouth shut and stop asking questions, he is pretty certain to get himself into trouble in Badtown," Young King Brady remarked in a whisper as the stage jogged on over the desert.

"Decidedly," replied Old King Brady. "Do you know what I am thinking, Harry?"

"No, governor."

"That he may be our man."

"The idea had occurred to me, I must confess."

"I believe it. I thought so when we first left Gila City."

"Why don't you speak to him, and let him know who we are?"

"Time enough, Harry. If he were half bright he would know who we are."

"Why, of course. He must have seen our pictures."

"Unquestionably."

"Is he very rich?"

"They say Decimus Bassett is worth at least ten millions."

"I wonder if this can be the man?"

"And I am wondering if it is going to rain, and I believe it is," said Old King Brady, peering out from under the umbrella at the gathering clouds.

Now rain in Arizona is a pretty serious business. Often not a drop falls in that strange country for months together. When it does start in raining, it does business for all it is worth. Old dry watercourses suddenly become roaring torrents. Sandy deserts are temporarily transformed into lakes. Whole towns have been washed away, and as for stage coaches, two years before the Nortons stage was swamped on the "Dome Rock Trail," over which it was now traveling, and not a soul on board escaped, the wreck of the stage turning up at Fort Yuma, in the Colorado River, later on.

"Driver, what do you think about the weather?" demanded Old King Brady, looking out from under the umbrella again.

"Kean't say!" growled Dirty Jim, giving the off horse a cut.

"Do you think it will rain?"

"It's rainin' now, pard."

"Over where those black clouds are?"

"Yes."

"I mean here."

"Hard to say."

"Do you think the clouds will work over this way?"

"If they do, it will rain."

"But will they?"

"Judge, I dunno."

"When did it rain last?"

"'Bout six months ago."

"Then the chances are against it."

"Dead against it. Them clouds work up till they strike the Dome Rock Range, and then they are throw'd back. That's the way of it."

"Suppose they are not thrown back?"

"Then it will rain."



"I wish it might," put in the fussy man. "It would cool the atmosphere and make it much pleasanter."

"Haw! Haw! Haw!" laughed Dirty James. "Cool the atmosphere! That's a good one! Haw! Haw! Haw!"

"Well, my friend, what are you laughing at now?" demanded the fussy man. "Does not rain usually cool the atmosphere, may I ask?"

Of course, such is usually the case. But out in Arizona everything appears to be different from everywhere else. Often the hottest time there is directly after rain. The fussy man, of course, did not know this. He was new to the country. He was to learn a lot about Arizona before he got through with this trip.

Right in the midst of his guffaw, Dirty James suddenly stopped laughing. He looked off at the Dome Rock Range with an expression of anxiety on his face.

"What's the matter?" demanded Old King Brady.

"Matter enough!" cried the driver, cutting his horses with the whip. "Them clouds has got over the Dome."

"And that means rain?"

"Rain! Didn't I tell yer. Yew jest wait and see."

Dirty James knew his business. The black clouds having passed the Dome, which was a vast stretch of rounded rocks which crowned the distant mountain ridge, came sweeping over the desert with a rapidity altogether amazing.

The stage was now crossing a deep sandy basin of considerable extent. This basin was actually nothing else but the bed of an ancient lake.

Dirty James had seen it full of water before, and had no desire to be caught in it now.

"G'lang! G'lang! G'lang!"

He laid the whip on to the leaders with a vengeance. The horses dashed on over the desert for all they were worth.

In the distance a flock of birds could be seen shooting southward. Coyotes were howling, and every now and then a jack-rabbit would spring across their path.

It grew darker and darker.

The stage was almost out of the basin when the first heavy drops began to fall.

"You better crowd inside, gents. They'll have to make room for you somehow," Dirty James remarked.

The fussy man took advantage of the opportunity. The Bradys, however, announced their intention of holding their seats under the umbrella, each drawing on a thin rubber coat for protection against the coming storm.

And it came!

Such a storm King Brady had never witnessed before. There was a brief rush of wind, which swept the sand around the stage. Then the rain fell in torrents—tubfuls,

rivers, oceans of it. In an amazingly short time the stage was running through water up to the hubs of the wheels. The horses went wallowing through it the best they could. The Bradys huddled together under the umbrella. Dirty Jim pulled an old blanket over him and began to crack his whip.

"Nine miles to Badtown!" he bawled. "If this yere sort of thing don't stop, we will be swept into the Colorado before we've gone five!"

On stumbled the horses; on dragged the coach. The sand was all mud now, and the mud made it mighty hard going, and the Badtown stage was right at the worst of it when all at once they came to a huge pile of rocks tumbled right in their path.

"Say, gents, some sez ez heow them thar rocks was onct a building in the days of Montezuma!" cried Dirty James. "Of course, I don't know nothing about it myself, but— Oh, gee whiz! Holy jumping Jerusalem! What are we up against now?"

"We are up against a hold-up, and that's what!" Old King Brady cried.

It was nothing else.

Ten masked men suddenly rode out from behind the pile of stones. They were mounted on sturdy bronchos and each carried a long-barreled rifle of the old style. Several wore their hair long, hanging down over their shoulders. The leader's hair was particularly long. He wore a Mexican serape, or cloak, and a white hat with a stiff broad brim, all hung with little bells.

"Hold your horses, Dirty Jim!" he shouted. "You two on the box seat, up hands, or you're dead men!"

"Get your hands up, Harry!" breathed Old King Brady. "Remember the fake roll, my boy."

As is well known, the Bradys always travel prepared for all emergencies. Each had a roll of bills for just this occasion. As for their valuables, if the hold-up men could find them, they would do well.

In an instant the stage was surrounded. A fearful thunderclap came just as Dirty James reined in. But above the roar and rattle of the thunder, the frightened passengers over the Dome Rock trail heard the startling cry:

"Hands up, gents! Hands up! or we will send you to blazes schooner rigged!"

## CHAPTER II.

### NIGHT IN BADTOWN WITHOUT A BED.

"Keep perfectly cool, Harry. We will get out of this all right," Old King Brady remarked.



"Oh, I am not a bit afraid, governor. It's only the delay."

"Stop that talk up there on the box! You long-legged old duffer, get down hyar with your son and shell out first!"

"Certainly, sir. Anything to oblige," replied Old King Brady.

He climbed down in the rain, Harry following him. The stage door was thrown open.

"Is Mr. Decimus Bassett hyar?" the man with the long hair and the bells on his hat called out.

Evidently the Bradys had been mistaken. Nobody answered to the name of Decimus Bassett.

"Is Mr. Decimus Bassett hyar?" the leader called again. Still there was no answer.

"He hain't here, boys!" the leader sang out.

"So I s'posed," replied another of the outlaws.

"Telled you so at the start!" still another said.

"Let's do business and light out!" cried a fourth.

"Right!" said the leader. "Gents, I'll trouble you to pass over your valuables, and be quick about it, for we hain't got no time to fool away."

"Why, this is an outrage!" cried the fussy man. "I protest against it. Driver, aren't you going to do something? Are we to stand up in a row and be robbed like this?"

"You'll have to take your medicine, pard," returned the driver. "I'm not bucking against Happy Jack this trip."

"Shut your mouth, or I'll plug your mouth with a lead pill!" the man with bells on his hat roared.

"Dumb from this on!" said Dirty James. "Go ahead with your work, boys, and let me get out'n this."

"Why, I really believe that wicked man is standing in with the thieves!" the fussy man called out. "I protest against this. I shall complain to the owners of the stage line. I——"

He got no further. The butt of a rifle laid across the side of his head reduced him to silence. There was no other kicker in the stage. The remaining inside passengers were all old Arizonians and well used to this sort of thing. They gave up quietly. So did the Bradys—their fake rolls.

In the darkness and storm their true character was not discovered.

The last to be tackled was the fussy man. They had to search him. The only thing he would give up was his watch. Quite a thick wad of greenbacks was taken from him, however. Then out of an inside pocket came a leather wallet, well stuffed with papers. Across the face of it in gold letters the name "Decimus Bassett" was printed.

"Upon my word!" cried the leader of the bandits. "So you are the man?"

The fussy little man was deathly pale now. He stood trembling from head to foot and never said a word.

"You are Decimus Bassett?" demanded the bandit again.

"Well, what if I am?"

"You are the owner of the Eureka mine?"

"Well, as I said before, what if I am?"

"Your son wants to see you, Mr. Bassett," said the bandit with a sneer.

"And I want to see my son."

"No doubt."

"Can you tell me where he is?"

"I can."

"Do so, and I will reward you well."

"I shall do more than that."

"How more?"

"I shall take you to him."

"What?"

"Oh, you heard me."

"But I don't want to go."

"It doesn't make any difference what you want. You must go."

"Does that mean that I am a prisoner?"

"It means that your friend Mellor wants to see you."

"My friend?"

"Is he not?"

"Don't speak it. The traitor. If I thought you were Matt Mellor behind that mask I——"

"Well, what?"

"I'd spring at your throat and strangle you!"

"Ha! Ha! Boston boasts! The spirit of Bunker Hill is aroused!"

"Then beware of it."

"Old man, you are bold."

"I am desperate."

"You are not such a fool as you look. We shall have to take extra care of you."

"Do you mean to force me to accompany you to the mountains?"

"I do."

"I refuse to go."

"You will have to go. Tie him up, boys. We can't waste time here."

Mr. Decimus Bassett put up quite a respectable fight for a few minutes. It amounted to nothing, however. The bandits soon tamed him down. He was lifted upon a horse and tied there.

Preparations were being made by the bandits for an im-



mediate start when they suddenly missed the two Bradys.

"Where are them two fellers?" the one called "Happy Jack" by the driver, sang out.

Nobody knew. They had been standing there a minute before and now they had disappeared. If they had been of any importance to the plans of the bandits an effort would have been made to find them. As it happened, they were not. They mounted, and the order was given to start.

As they went dashing by the pile of rocks shots rang out.

"This way! Here they are! Shoot 'em down to a man!" a powerful voice cried.

The horse upon which Mr. Decimus Bassett rode was shot from under him. So was Happy Jack's. As the leader pitched forward on his face, the shots from behind the rocks came again.

Some of the passengers, plucking up courage, joined in and fired, too. Panic among the bandits was the result. In the darkness and storm they thought they had been attacked by a large force. Several were seriously wounded. Happy Jack got another horse behind one of his men and gave the cry for a hasty retreat. Away they dashed through the water, leaving their prisoner behind them.

Meanwhile, no force of armed men had appeared from behind the rocks.

As the bandits vanished, an old man and a young one came strolling out into view. They were the Bradys, of course. The stampede had been created by them alone.

"By gracious, them's the bucks to do the business!" Dirty James called out; "but if you'd a-know'd you was up against Happy Jack Hyer's gang, you wouldn't have dared!"

The Bradys paid no attention to these remarks. Just then Old King Brady was busy with Mr. Decimus Bassett. The unfortunate Bostonian was half drowned. There he lay tied to the dead horse, floundering in the water. Old King Brady set him free and stood him on his feet. The man's fussiness was all gone now. Nor did he appear to be greatly frightened. It was more of a determined look on his face.

"You have done me a great service, sir, you and your son," he said.

"The young man is not my son; he is my business partner," was the reply.

"Oh, indeed! Still the service is the same."

"It is kind of you to say so."

"Oh, I mean it. Those men would have held me for ransom in the mountains, where they already hold my son."

"It is a serious case, Mr. Bassett."

"More so than you have any idea of. That is why I denied my identity."

"You were quite right."

"All aboard, gentlemen!" cried the driver. "We must be on the move."

It had stopped raining now, and, as Dirty Jim predicted, it was hotter than ever. And this in the dark, too, for the sun had now gone down.

The Nortons' stage rolled on into Badtown ten miles further along the trail. All the way Dirty James—so the driver was invariably called—regaled the Bradys with stories of the bold doings of the Happy Jack Hyer band of outlaws.

"You fooled 'em completely. You made 'em believe there was a big squad of you behind the rocks, or they would never have took off the way they did," he said again and again.

Ten years before, Badtown had been one of the most notorious places in Arizona. That was in the days of the boom. Gold in large quantities was then believed to have been struck among the mountains of the Dome Rock Range. There was a great rush for the new camps, as usual.

Badtown became the starting point. It was a convenient place to camp before setting out on the mountain trail. Here a town speedily grew up. Although the rush was all over now, Badtown still held its own, after a fashion. There were good mines being worked in the Dome Rock Range. More of these later. At present we must join the Bradys and Mr. Decimus Bassett at the stage office.

Here they stood looking at what had once been the Phoenix Hotel. This was Badtown's principal house of entertainment. It was, in fact, the only hotel of any account. Now it was of no account for anything but kindling wood. A mass of blackened ruins occupied the site of the Phoenix Hotel.

"Well, this is a bad job," remarked Mr. Decimus Bassett, clutching a dress suit case which the outlaws never overhauled.

"Very," replied Old King Brady.

"When did it burn, do you know?"

"Why, the man in the stage office says it was struck by lightning during the storm."

"Bad enough! I intended to stop here."

"So did we."

"Where can we go now?"

"I understand there is no room to be had in town."

"Worse yet."

"The Phoenix was full, and the guests have now filled everything else up."



"We must do something."

"First thing is to get something to eat," remarked Young King Brady. "For my part, I am half starved."

"I shan't object to a good dinner," said Mr. Bassett.

"Well, you won't get it," replied Old King Brady. "The best we can do is to tie up in the 'Howling Coyote' saloon."

"Cheerful name," chuckled Mr. Bassett. "Where does this 'Howling Coyote' keep himself?"

"Down the street where you see that red light."

"Then, my dear sir, let us go there and get something to eat, by all means; but it must be understood that, on this occasion, you dine with me."

"As you will," replied Old King Brady.

"May I enquire your name?" Mr. Bassett asked.

"We are the Bradys," replied the old detective.

"The Bradys?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well! Well!"

"You seem surprised."

"I am surprised at myself."

"How so?"

"For being such a fool."

"Don't be too hard on yourself, Mr. Bassett."

"Of course, I might have known that you were the Bradys. I have seen your pictures often enough."

"And you knew we were coming to Badtown?"

"Assuredly, since you came here on my business."

"Just so. Our appointment was at the Phoenix Hotel this evening at eight o'clock."

"And here we are an hour late, and no hotel. I can understand your prompt and brave action now, gentlemen."

"Don't mention it, please."

"I undoubtedly owe my liberty to you, and, perhaps, my life."

"And we shall owe our dinner to you, Mr. Bassett. Let us get down to the 'Howling Coyote' as quick as possible, for I expect the crowd will devour all the food in the place. They hurried along the main street. It was just such a street as one sees in most Arizona towns of new growth.

The houses were all frame and nearly all had stores on the ground floor. Some were stores only, and had no upper rooms. These had what were termed false fronts; that is, the front was built to the height of two stories, with blinds covering dummy windows. These false fronts were supposed to make the buildings more imposing. As a matter of fact, they made them look very absurd. The "Howling Coyote" saloon was not one of these. It was actually a two-story building, and a good big one at that.

There was a variety theater, a bar, a gambling room and rooms for lodgers all crowded together under one roof.

Of course the "Coyote" covered a good deal of ground. It was always well filled in the evening, but on this night it was simply packed. Men and women were crowding in and out through the big swing doors. Along the bar they were ranged three and four deep.

The fire had brought miners down from the mountains and in from the outlying camp. They were here to make a night of it.

"Of course, the managers of the "Howling Coyote" were not kicking.

From the way the whiskey was disappearing it bid fair to be a lively night.

"Shall we stop here and take one of these tables?" asked Harry. "The dining room seems to be full."

"I guess we had better," remarked Mr. Bassett.

"We might take one of the tables in the theater," said Old King Brady. "Heavens, how that woman does howl!"

They could see the theater opening off at the end of the bar room. There was a long run of seats but partially filled with tables at the sides. At the end was the stage. Here a young woman in tights and spangles was prancing about, singing a comic song.

"I think we had better stay here," said Mr. Bassett. "We shall attract less attention, and I have a lot to say to you."

"Very well, sir," returned Old King Brady.

They picked out a table and seated themselves. To put the waiters in good humor Old King Brady called for beer, which nobody drank. Just then four dark-looking foreigners, with harp, flute and violins, entered the bar room. They took up their place in a convenient corner and began to play. The music, the singing in the theater, the loud voices at the bar, all helped to make a perfect babel of sound.

"Lively place this," remarked Mr. Bassett.

"Wail till the whiskey gets to work," replied Old King Brady. "It will be lively enough before we get through. You will find it is no joke to put in a night in Badtown without a bed."

But there was no other way. Money might have bought them beds if they had only known where to look. But they did not, and under the circumstances the "Howling Coyote" was about as good a shelter as they could expect to find.



## CHAPTER III.

## THE RAID OF THE "HAPPY JACK HYER" GANG.

Say what you like about the "Howling Coyote," they did put out pretty good meals.

The place could never have held its popularity if they had not. There is nobody more particular about his eating than the lucky miner, with a bag of gold dust in his pocket.

The Bradys ordered a beefsteak and got a fine one. The coffee was good, and the potatoes and onions well cooked.

Oh, the "Howling Coyote" could do it up in good shape when it chose!

Over the meal the Bradys and Mr. Bassett began to talk business. All the detectives knew of the Boston man's affairs was contained in a telegram sent to them in New York less than a week before. The despatch asked if they could meet him at Badtown on this particular night. It added that they were wanted on a case of great importance, and that they would be liberally paid. Not being particularly busy at the time, Old King Brady wired back that they would be in Badtown, Arizona, on the date named. Next mail came a draft of \$500 to cover expenses. The Bradys cashed the draft, and here they were.

"And now, gentlemen," said Mr. Bassett, "I want to tell you my story, so that you may know just what it is I want you to do for me."

"I am the principal owner of a gold mine called the Eureka, located in the Dome Rock Range. If you ask me just where this mine is situated, strangely enough I cannot tell you, and yet it stands me in a good \$50,000.

"I took this property for a debt. I came into possession about a year ago. It was understood that the mine had just begun to pay and that the chances of its proving a success were very good.

"As I had no time to visit Arizona myself I engaged a man, whom I believed to be a competent miner, to go out and take charge for me. His name was Matthew Mellor. He had spent years in Arizona, and came highly recommended to me. You are following me, gentlemen? I want you to understand just what the situation is."

"We are following you closely," replied Old King Brady. "Go on."

"My instructions to Mr. Mellor were to proceed to Tucson and there take from the bank the papers relating to the Eureka mine, which had been deposited by my creditor before he turned the property over to me.

"He was then to proceed to the mine and make an ex-

haustive report on its resources, and to start up work. He was given several thousand dollars to cover expenses, and he started away from Boston, assuring me that I should hear favorable reports within two weeks."

"And you heard nothing?" asked Young King Brady.

"There you are wrong. I had weekly letters from Mr. Mellor for many months.

"They told me of the bad condition of the property; of the great promise of success it offered if it could only be put in shape; they told me many other fairy stories, gentlemen; in short, I was jollied along and bled to the tune of over \$15,000, until one fine day I woke up to the fact that I had been lied to in the worst kind of way.

"I found that all Mellor's letters were false; that I did not even know where the Eureka mine was located. I learned that Mellor had shipped a hundred mule loads of ore to the Badtown smelter, for which he had rendered no account to me.

"In short, the man was a thief and a swindler; he had stolen my mine, for the location of the Eureka was a profound secret, and when Mellor got the papers from the bank at Tucson he carried away the secret, and here was I left out in the cold."

"But the man who transferred the property to you?" said Old King Brady.

"Is dead, my dear sir. No information can be had from him."

"But do not the records show where the Eureka claim was located?"

"There we are helpless again. The claim never was located under the mining law. I own a tract of land in the Dome Rock Range, a hundred miles square. Somewhere on this tract lies the Eureka. You see, as I own the land outright, there was no necessity of locating the mine under the law."

"I see. And what did you do when you found out that Mellor was a scoundrel?"

"Gentlemen, when I found out that Mellor was a scoundrel, I did just the most foolish thing a man could have done—sent my son Billy, a boy of nineteen, to make inquiries and learn how the matter stood."

"Oh!" exclaimed Old King Brady.

"Say nothing. I know now I was a fool. I sent a boy on a man's errand."

"Always a mistake."

"Of course. But the boy was full of energy and wanted to go."

"And the result?"

"Was just what might have been expected. He was lured



into the mountains, captured by Matt Mellor's gang, and has been held for ransom ever since."

"I see," said the old detective. "For you, Mr. Bassett, this has been a very serious affair."

"Very. It has cost me my mine, my money and my son."

"And you have refused to pay ransom?"

"Not at all. The first demand was for \$5,000. It was made by letter in Mellor's own handwriting. I paid it. The boy was to be delivered in Tueson."

"Nothing of the kind occurred?"

"No, indeed. The money was held and along came a letter from Mellor, saying that if I wanted to get Billy back I must rush out \$5,000 more."

"I see!" cried Harry. "They thought all they had to do was to shout and you would cough up the cash?"

"Exactly, but that is the time they got left."

"You wired us, then?" asked Old King Brady.

"Immediately. They must have got wind of our appointment at Badtown in some way."

"It is indeed so. They called your name when they held up the stage."

"You noticed that?"

"Certainly."

"What is your opinion of that hold-up, Mr. Brady?"

"That it was designed for your special benefit."

"There can be no question about that. But for your help I should now be in the hands of my enemies."

"And you want of us, what?" asked Harry.

"To get me back my mine and get me back my son, and to bring these people to justice."

"It's a big contract," replied Old King Brady.

"But you do not refuse to undertake it?"

"No."

"I suppose you thought it strange that I did not tell you what I wanted of you before you started?"

"Not at all."

"Are you sometimes engaged that way?"

"We are engaged in all sorts of ways, Mr. Bassett."

"I did it to try you."

"To try us? How do you mean?"

"I thought that if you would jump out to Arizona merely on my telegram you were just the kind of men to deal with."

"Well, we are here."

"And most fortunately for me you are. If you had not been in that stage——"

"Oh, let that pass, Mr. Bassett."

"Very good. Will you tell me now what, in your judgment, should be done?"

"The first thing we want is to find a clue," said Young King Brady.

"So it seems to me," replied Mr. Bassett; "and a very difficult matter it will prove, I fear."

"Why, we already have the clue," said Old King Brady.

"Already have it? What do you mean?"

"This Happy Jack Hyer knew all about you, Mr. Bassett."

"I see! I see!"

"Consequently he must have known your man, Matt Mellor."

"Undoubtedly he must."

"And there you are. We must locate Happy Jack first of all."

"Your reasoning is correct. Shall I order more steak?"

"No more for me," said Old King Brady.

"I have had all I can eat," Young King Brady added.

"Something to drink? Coffee, beer—anything the house affords?"

"Nothing at all," said Old King Brady. "Now, shall I give you my suggestions in this case?"

"I wish you would."

"Nothing can be done to-night. We must stay here, and then when morning comes, the Bradys disappear."

"How do you mean?"

"Don't doubt that we have been fully sized up; don't question that you are not known."

"I suppose so."

"To a dozen persons in Badtown, no doubt."

"Well?"

"Well, we vanish with the night."

"In other words, go into disguise, Mr. Brady?"

"Such is my meaning."

"But what about me?"

"What would you like to do?"

"Join you in your search."

"It can be arranged."

"You may think I am rather indifferent about my son, Mr. Brady?"

The thought had occurred to Old King Brady. Not caring to answer, he merely bowed.

"It is not that. Billy is a wild boy. I think this will do him good."

"Possibly. There is no danger of these outlaws killing him."

"Not while there is a cent to be squeezed out of me. You agree to that?"

"Oh, certainly."

"And then——"

Just here came an interruption. Loud screams were heard in the theater. The music ceased. A pistol shot rang out. More screams then. A girl in the short dress of a ballet dancer came running out into the bar room. She was closely pursued by a tough of the "Alkali Ike" type. The man was crazy drunk. He flourished a revolver in one hand and a bowie knife in the other.

"It's Tom Torpey on a tear again!" the men at the bar cried.

"He'll do Maggie!"

"Look out for Maggie Hynes!" was shouted.

"Look out for yourselves!" Tom Torpey bawled. "Let no feller dare to interfere with me!"

He began firing right and left.

As the Bradys afterward learned, this Badtown bum, not being suited with Miss Maggie's dancing, had jumped on the stage and attacked her with his revolver, then hunting her with his revolver through the theater into the bar



room. The poor girl was frightened almost to death. So were all the bar room bums.

Not a soul had the courage to interfere, but the Bradys. They were on their feet like a flash.

Mr. Bassett picked up a chair, but it was to shield himself from Tom Torpey's bullets, now flying right and left. Harry caught the panting damsel in his arms. Old King Brady made a spring for the tough, and seized his pistol at the risk of having his own head blown off.

"Bang!" it went, the shot flying within an inch of the detective's forehead. At the same instant a most startling interruption occurred, which brought the whole business to a speedy end.

The big swing doors in front of the saloon were suddenly dashed open. In rode a long-haired man, mounted on a coal black horse, with a drawn revolver in each hand.

"Happy Jack Hyer!" the toughs shouted.

They ducked in all directions.

"That's yours, Tom Torpey!" yelled the man.

A bullet took the tough in the forehead, and he threw up his hands and fell back.

"Halt!" cried Old King Brady, whipping out his revolver and seizing the horse by the bridle. At the same moment two other toughs rode into the "Howling Coyote."

Old King Brady fired, and a return bullet whizzed past his head.

## CHAPTER IV.

### INTO THE MOUNTAINS.

Happy Jack Hyer and his gang had captured the "Howling Coyote." Twenty toughs, all heavily armed, came bursting into the place. They had sworn to "do" Tom Torpey and raid the place, it afterward appeared.

They broke all the mirrors and stole all the cigars and bottled whiskey they could lay hands on. The audience was driven out of the theater at the point of the revolver. Many did not wait to be driven, but jumped out the windows. The company escaped by the stage door.

• Out in the bar room there was a big trap door connecting with the cellar, where the beer and whiskey were stored. Happy Jack pulled up this trap and tumbled six dead men down on the barrels. He and his brother bad men had done for them all. Tom Torpey, who began the disturbance, was one of them. Two of the bartenders went the same way. On top of these Old King Brady was thrown, too.

Not that the old detective was dead.

This was not Old King Brady's first experience in a tough town. He bore the reputation of having nine lives. Shot he had been in the forehead and stunned for the moment. Dead he certainly was not, but when he came to his senses he was lying on top of one dead man and between two others.

It was a dreadful situation. For a few moments, it did not seem to the brave old detective that he could ever stand up against it. Then he scrambled to his feet and, seeing a light in the distance, made his way toward it among the whiskey barrels.

Old King Brady felt about as badly cut up as it was possible for a man to feel. And no wonder. While the struggle was still going on, and before he went down, he saw Harry dragged off by the toughs and Mr. Bassett with him, to say nothing of the poor little variety girl, Maggie Hynes.

"It's up to me to rescue them all," thought Old King Brady, "and how I am ever going to do it I don't know, but one thing is certain, no man looking as I looked before this thing happened must appear in Badtown again."

He reached the light at last. It was a mere glimmer shining down into the cellar. Old King Brady discovered that it came down a pair of stairs and through a trap door from the dressing room behind the stage. There was no one in the room, and the window stood open.

Old King Brady closed the window and peered through the door. The Howling Coyote theater was all dark. There was but one solitary light burning in the bar room beyond. Probably this was the first time on record when the "Coyote" had closed before morning, unless at some time when it had been cleaned out before.

Old King Brady was no man to cry over spilled milk. He went right to work then and there to repair damages and disguise himself. He could hardly have struck in at a better place than the dressing room of the "Coyote."

He washed the blood off his face, and dressed his wound and changed his clothes for a rough miner's dress, which he found there and which, fortunately, was large enough to go over his ordinary suit. Nobody could make a better disguise than the detective. A heavy false beard which he had in one of his secret pockets, completed the transformation.

Old King Brady opened the window and climbed out. No one would ever have known him as one of the men who came into Badtown on the Nortons stage coach.

"Now to find out what has become of them all and then to act," Old King Brady thought.

He felt the most anxious about his young partner, and yet he remained perfectly cool.

The detective now found himself in an alley, and he hurried through it to Badtown's main street.

The windows in front of the "Coyote" had been broken during the raid. Boards had been hastily nailed over them. The outer door—seldom ever shut—was now closed and locked. Old King Brady rapped on the door good and hard. There was no answer at first, but when he repeated it, the door was opened a little way, and a man cautiously peered out.

"You can't come in here," he said. "I wish you would oblige me by going away. There are plenty of other places in town where you can get a drink."

"I don't want a drink, boss," replied Old King Brady. "I was in here at the time of the raid. I want to inquire about a feller what was with me. I can't find him nowhere about town."

"Who was he?" asked the man.

"Name of Dick Somers. Don't believe you know him, though."

"No, I don't. There was a lot in here."



"Let me come in; I want to ask you about what happened. Dick was my side partner, and I feel awfully worried about him. Say, boss, there's no harm in me. See, I got one shot here in the head, and I feel kinder faint."

The man opened the door and admitted the detective, carefully closing and locking it behind him. Then he gave it to Happy Jack "good and plenty." It was easy enough to swear at the outlaw when he wasn't around.

The man who was manager of the theater had hidden in a closet while the shooting was going on. Not so his companion, however. He had been right in it and carried a bullet in his arm to prove his claim.

"Take a drink, old man," he said, putting up a decanter. "It will do you good. No pay. We aren't doing any more business to-night."

"Can't you tell me anything about my side partner, gents?" Old King Brady asked when he pushed the decanter back.

"Describe him," said the bartender.

But as the man Old King Brady went to some pains to describe had no existence outside of his own imagination, the bartender had no information to give.

"Where were you at the time the shooting began?" he asked.

"We were inside in the third row when that big feller chased the girl off the stage," replied Old King Brady. "We ran out here then. I saw a young feller what sat at that table catch the girl when she fainted."

"Yes, that's right. He was a brave little chap. They carried him off with the gal."

"And there was an old man with him, what caught Happy Jack's horse by the bridle?"

"He was shot dead. They tumbled him down that trap door where you are standing. His body is down there now."

"And another old man was in the party. He had a chair up before his face. Whatever became of him?"

"They carried him off, too. Some of the boys say the raid was on his account."

Then the bartender went on to tell the story of the attack and of Mr. Bassett's rescue.

"I wish that the party had stopped out of here," he added. "Then this raid might not never have happened."

"Who were they?" Old King Brady innocently asked.

But the bartender did not know.

Old King Brady saw that there was little information to be obtained here. He accordingly left the saloon and went along Main street. He could not have struck a quieter time in Badtown. Every saloon was closed. The town had had enough of rows for one night.

Walking on toward the smelting works, the detective stopped to look at the big building behind the high fence. He had not been there more than a minute when a man, armed with a rifle, came running out of a gate.

"Get away from here! Get away from here!" he shouted. "If you don't I'll blow you to blazes, old man!"

"What?" drawled the detective.

"Oh, you heard."

"Waal, I thought I did, but I must have been mistaken. Why should you kill me?"

"Hain't you one of Happy Jack's gang?"

"Not at all."

"You're a stranger in Badtown, all right."

"Why, yes, I am."

"Well, we don't allow no strangers a-swooping about hyar."

"Everybody seems to be excited about here to-night?"

"And why not? Here's the Phoenix Hotel burned down, and the Howling Coyote all smashed to pieces, and a lot killed. I never seen Badtown livelier, and I've been here for two years."

"I was in the Coyote when them fellers attacked it," the detective said.

"The deuce you were! Tell us about it! No, don't come no nearer the gate. That hain't allowed."

"Say, neighbor, I'll tell you all right, but you must be mighty scary to be afraid of an old man like me."

"Them's orders. Tell me about the raid."

Old King Brady did so, enlarging on the story greatly. The tale of Happy Jack's raid on the Howling Coyote lost nothing in the telling at Old King Brady's hands. By this time the watchman at the smelting works' gate had lost something of his fear. Old King Brady gave him a drink of whiskey out of the little flask he usually carried for such cases as this. Then it was a cigar. By this time the watchman was ready to be questioned. But Old King Brady twisted things around so that he began the questioning first.

When the watchman remarked, "Say, old man, what brings you here in Badtown, anyhow?" Old King Brady knew he had him.

"I came over from Flagstaff to look for work," he said, "and I'm awfully cut up about this yere raid. As I was tellin' you, they cleaned me out of the last ounce. It didn't amount to much anyway, but now I hain't got grub stakes, an' I can't find nobody what knows nothing of this Eureka mine."

"What mine?" demanded the watchman, taking the cigar out of his mouth, and throwing the light of the lantern full in the detective's face.

"The Eureka, up in the Dome Rock Range somewhere, I was told."

"Well, so it is."

"Do you know it, partner?"

"Of course. We know them all. They all send their ore down to this mill to sell."

"Well then you are just the very man I want to see."

"Perhaps I am and perhaps I hain't."

"Oh, I'm sure you are. You can tell me where I'll find my friend, Matt Mellor. He's the super of the Eureka and the man I want to see."

The watchman shook his head.

"It hain't allowed," he said. "I'd like to talk, but I dassen't."

"What ain't allowed?"

"For us to give information about our customers."



"Now that's all right. Me an' Matt Mellor has been acquainted this long time. I know he's in trouble with the eastern stockholders of the Eureka."

"So I've heard."

"They are a lot of money sharks, them Boston and New York fellers are."

"Of course."

"Matt wrote me to Flagstaff to come on and he'd have a letter at the Phoenix Hotel what would give me full information how to get to the Eureka."

"You were too late for that."

"Durn it, yes. When I got into Badtown the hotel was burned."

"Did you come by the stage?"

"By the stage, yes."

"I wish I could help you."

"I wish to gracious you could, and I think you might."

Again the watchman threw the light of his lantern full upon Old King Brady. He seemed to be sizing him up. It was time to offer the flask again. Old King Brady suggested another drink. The watchman didn't "mind if he did." Soon afterward the detective had him ready for business.

"You follow Badtown Creek to its headwaters in the Dome Rock Range and you will be sure to run up against some of Matt Mellor's scouts," the watchman said.

"Oh, thank you," replied Old King Brady. "I shan't forget this."

Again he offered the watchman the flask and left him, feeling quite happy.

There was a livery stable at the other end of the street. Old King Brady made a bee-line for it now. The proprietor was a-bed and asleep in the shanty alongside. The detective soon aroused him, however. The man proved a typical horse-trader. With his kind, money always talks. Old King Brady had the money and knew how to do the talking. Twenty minutes later he rode out of Badtown.

All the rest of the night Old King Brady followed the creek until he reached the foot of the mountain range. Here Badtown Creek came tumbling out of a deep gorge to lose itself in the sandy plain beyond. Just now, owing to the rain, the water was everywhere on the run. Thus Old King Brady found no difficulty in following the creek up to its source, as he otherwise might have done. Alongside the foaming water was a narrow trail leading up the gorge.

"That's my way fast enough," thought Old King Brady. "I suppose I might as well take the bull by the horns and go right at it."

He turned his horse up the gorge, but before he had gone a hundred yards the challenge came:

"Halt! Advance one step further and you die!"

A voice had spoken from out of the darkness. Which side of the creek it came from it was impossible to say. Old King Brady reined in.

"Who are you?" the voice cried again. "Give me the word or you die."

## CHAPTER V.

### YOUNG KING BRADY GETS DOWN TO BUSINESS.

It is hardly necessary to describe the carrying off of Young King Brady and Mr. Bassett in all its details.

Happy Jack Hyer, the leader of the Dome Rock Range gang of outlaws, had supposed Old King Brady to be dead, or he never would have tumbled him through the trapdoor.

Harry and Mr. Bassett were captured at the start, and bound hand and foot. They were then placed on a horse together.

The girl Maggie Hynes was put upon another. She rode ahead of Harry and the Boston millionaire when they filed out of Badtown later on.

Their way was up Badtown Creek—just the same road taken by Old King Brady. When they reached the gorge they got the challenge, the same as the old detective.

"Eureka!" cried Happy Jack.

"Who found it?" called the voice again.

"Matt Mellor!" was the answer.

"And who bosses Matt Mellor?" came the call again.

And then the answer:

"Minnie, every time!"

"Right, brother. Move on. You vouch for the rest?"

"For all but the prisoners."

"How many prisoners do you bring us?" the voice called.

"Three."

"Ha! Who?"

"Maggie Hynes, the dancer at the Howling Coyote."

"Right! Good! That's orders. Who else?"

"Mr. Decimus Bassett, Esquire, of Boston."

"Ha! No?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Great Jehu!"

"What will the boss say to that?"

"What won't he say? And the other?"

"A little dude, who played a dirty trick on me when we held up the stage this afternoon."

"Wait, brother!"

"Well, what now? I was just going to start the horses up."

"Don't do it."

"But why not?"

"Do the dude first!"

"What's your hurry?"

"Do we want him up at the mine? Hardly, I think."

"Perhaps you are right."

"Bring him up on the table, and we will settle his business offhand."

"Agreed."

"You don't want all the boys?"

"No. Better send the rest ahead with the dancing girl."

"I agree to that."

"Who will you keep?"

"Randy Kelton, Spanish Pete, and Tony the Greaser."



"Good! Advance to the table, and we will proceed to do the dude."

They started up the gorge. The horses' hoofs made a great clatter on the slippery rock.

"Oh, this is terrible!" breathed Mr. Bassett. "To think that I should have brought you and your partner out here to your death."

"Don't worry," was Harry's whispered answer. "You don't seem to be any better off than I am."

"But Old——"

"Hush! Don't breathe his name!"

"He is dead, of course."

"Don't you believe a word of it. He is not an easy man to kill."

"But I saw him with my own eyes."

"I don't believe he is dead, and I don't intend to die myself."

"How can you help it?"

"I could manage all right if it were not for you."

"Never think of me. My life is in no sort of danger."

"I don't believe it is."

"Of course, it isn't. They will merely hold me for ransom."

"Then you won't mind if I try to save myself?"

"Not mind! I command you to do it, if my command can be obeyed."

"It shall be in this instance."

"Do you think you can do it?"

"I am going to make a big try at it."

"But you are not armed?"

"Who says so?"

"I saw them take your revolvers away from you."

"Ah, my dear sir, you don't know all our resources. I am armed all right enough."

"I am thankful to hear you say so. Do your best and never think of me."

In such low voices was this conversation carried on that not a word reached the ears of the outlaws. Meanwhile the horses continued to ascend the gorge. Harry watched every step carefully. Morning was dawning. He could see fairly well now.

"There is nothing in it for me to go on with these people," he reasoned. "I must escape if I possibly can."

It is one of Young King Brady's great tricks to slip his bonds. Harry has very small hands, and also knows how to double them up into the very smallest compass. It takes a sharp man to tie up Young King Brady so that he will stay tied. The worst of this case was the leg lashings.

Young King Brady carefully tested their strength. He made up his mind that he could break them if he exerted all his strength. The cord appeared to be old and rather rotten. Harry sized the situation up carefully, and then waited his chance.

At last the party came out upon a broad shelf of rock, from which a fine view could be had of the surrounding country. Here they halted to allow the horses to get their wind. Young King Brady looked down over the edge of the shelf. Badtown Creek made a fall of some twenty feet here,

The water dropped into a deep basin, and there formed a broad pool. From the pool it divided into two streams. One went dashing over ragged rocks down through the gorge they had just ascended. The other passed into a narrow rift, where the great ledge was split. Where it went after this, Young King Brady could not see.

It seemed to him that he was not likely to get a better chance. The young detective thought fast and came to a quick determination. There was no chance to give Mr. Bassett a tip on his intention. Suddenly the Boston man was startled by a wild cry behind him.

Happy Jack and his men were startled, too. They saw Young King Brady spring from the horse to which they supposed him to be tied and dive headlong over the rocks. He struck the pool and disappeared with a splash, uttering another cry as he went down.

"Holy mackerel!" cried Happy Jack.

"Carramba!" echoed Spanish Pete.

"Dat muchacho (boy) is crazy!" shouted Tony the Greaser.

"Shoot him when he rises!" yelled Happy Jack. "Jumping jack-rabbits, Randy Kelton, you made a nice job tying that fellow! That's what you did."

All rifles were turned toward the pool. It was dark down there in the shadows. The boy did not rise that they could see.

"I think he was seized with sudden madness," suggested Mr. Bassett.

"Say, nobody wants your opinion," Randy Kelton growled.

"Who says they don't!" cried Happy Jack. "I want to know how this thing happened."

"Shall I speak?" said Mr. Bassett, anxious to help Harry out.

Mr. Bassett had become very deeply impressed with the shrewdness of Young King Brady. He made up his mind that Harry knew what he was about.

"He talked wild to me a while ago," he said. "I think he had been drinking."

"But how did he get loose?" demanded Happy Jack.

"I can't tell you. He whispered to me that he could easily get loose, but I can't tell you how it was done."

Happy Jack and the others watched the pool in silence for a few minutes. If they expected Harry to appear on the surface of the water they were doomed to disappointment.

Then Happy Jack dismounted. He examined the remains of the cords fastened to the saddle.

"This stuff is as rotten as junk," he snorted. "Here are the big cords broken all right."

"How about the others?" asked Randy.

"How can I tell when they are not here. I'm going down into the gulch. Wait till I return."

Happy Jack was back again in about ten minutes.

"That fellow is dead at the bottom of the pool, all right!" he declared. "Come, let us move on."

He sprang upon his horse and led the way up the gorge. And how about Young King Brady? He was all right.



He knew just what he was doing before he did it. He was as fine a swimmer as Old King Brady was a bad one. Harry could remain under water a good three minutes, and keep on swimming all the time. This was just what he did now. He got under the pool and he stayed under, and when he came up he was in the rift in the ledge.

Here the stream was not over four feet wide, and at least six feet deep. Harry struck out for all he was worth. He swam on and on, never stopping to reflect where this strange journey was likely to end.

For a few moments, the shouts of the outlaws could be heard behind him. Then their voices died away in the distance, and nothing but the plashing of water on ahead could be heard. That meant another waterfall.

It was only a question of time when Young King Brady would be up against it.

This was a very serious matter. The rocks on either side of him were absolutely perpendicular. Their height was increasing. When Harry started in on the rift it was not more than twenty feet up to the top of the rocks. Now it was fully a hundred feet. It seemed to be growing higher every moment.

"When I come to the falls what on earth am I going to do?" thought Young King Brady.

There was no chance to land on either side. There wasn't footing enough to support a hen.

"I'm afraid I shall have to go back!" thought Harry.

The falls were becoming horribly near now. The water was tumbling over the rocks with ever increasing noise, when all at once a bright light flashed up the gulch directly in Harry's face.

"Salvation for sinners!" shouted a voice. "What do I see?"

What Young King Brady saw was a head and a hand. The head had a shabby high hat upon it and gray chin whiskers of the billy-goat style. The hand held a reflecting lantern, which threw the light in Young King Brady's face.

Both came out from the rocks on the right. Harry saw at once that here there must be a cave.

"Hello!" he called.

"Hello!" answered the voice. "Who the blazes are you?"

"A drowning man, boss!"

"Is the drowning man, who seems to be a boy, one of Happy Jack Hyer's gang? Because if he is I'm going to shoot him. Salvation for sinners! Look out for yourself, there!"

The lantern went into the left hand. In the right appeared a revolver. Thus covered, Harry would have ducked under if it had not been for the falls. But the falls were a reality, and he made one more appeal.

"Judge, don't shoot me. I don't belong to Happy Jack's gang. I've just escaped from them," he sang out.

"Good! Them words has proved your salvation!" cried the man. "There hain't no need of shooting you. All I have to do is to let you go on in your mad career as you are going, and in two minutes you'll be dashed to pices on the rocks below. Ha! Ha! Ha! Mad career is good! I guess I'll let you go."

"That man is crazy!" thought Young King Brady. "I must jolly him if I expect to save my life."

He burst into a loud laugh.

"Ha! Ha! Ha! You're right. Mad career is fine! but say, Judge, I want to have a little talk with you. Lend me a helping hand, will you? Pull me into your cave."

"Hush!" cried the man, mysteriously. "How did you know my official title? I am a judge! Instead of being on the bench just now I am on the stool of repentance. Salvation for sinners! I want no spies about me. I guess I can't help you, young man. Go on in your mad career. Go on to your death!"

## CHAPTER VI.

### OLD KING BRADY FINDS THE LOST GOLD MINE.

"Brother, I have no password, and I don't want to die!" Old King Brady shouted. "Hear me before you shoot, for I have a few words to say."

"Say them quick, then!" called the voice. "I am acting under orders, and my orders are to bill all who come this way without the word."

"And right enough too if you don't want folks to come this way, but you won't make nothing by billing me."

"Say you, say quick, old man."

"Well, it's easy said. I want work. I am about starved. I was told I might get a job from Mr. Miller away up at the head of Badtown Creek."

"Who told you that?"

"A feller I met in Badtown. He is nightwatchman at the smelting works."

"Hello!"

"Well?"

"What else did he tell you?"

"That Matt Mellor needed men to work his mine."

"Are you a miner?"

"I learnt nothing else."

"Where have you worked?"

"Pretty much everywhere around California and Nevada."

"How about Arizona?"

"I am a stranger in Arizona. I've been in hard luck and just now I'm on the tramp."

"Is that all you have to say?"

"That's all. If you want to shoot me why do it. I might as well be dead as to be the way I am."

"If you are that hard up why don't you sell your horse?" asked the voice.

Old King Brady gave a short laugh.

"Why, the fact is, stranger, this isn't my horse."

"Who's is it? Are there any more of you there?"

"Oh, no; not that. I only run up against the horse, and when I found he was going my way, I thought I might as well get on his back."

"You're a good one."

"Must I turn back? I'll do just as you say."



"No; you stay where you are. I shall have to keep you waiting about half an hour."

"And then?"

"Perhaps you'll get work."

"All right. I'll hitch the horse. You can have him if you get me the chance to work. I don't care much about riding a horse anyway. It makes me lame and sore. If I have got to keep on the tramp, I had just about as soon walk as ride."

"We will see about that," replied the voice. "Stay where you are, old man, until I call again."

"All right," said Old King Brady cheerfully. "Just whatever you say. You haven't got any terbacker what you let a fellow have in the meantime, I s'pose?"

There was no answer returned to this.

Old King Brady dismounted.

Hitching the horse to a projecting spur of rocks, he sat down to wait.

In a minute he heard a sharp whistle.

This was presently answered by another from a distance. For the rest of fully half an hour all was still.

"Hello, old man!" the voice suddenly called again.

"Hello!" cried Old King Brady, springing up.

"You may go on."

"Good! Where do I go to?"

"Ask no questions. Just get a move on you, and remember as you ride on through this gorge that eyes are always upon you, that hands go with the eyes, and that rifles are in the hands."

"Oh, I see."

"No, you don't."

"I mean I am to be done up in case I don't just suit you fellows in here."

"That's it."

"Wall, I don't much care. I'm about used up anyway. Say, have you a little terbacker you can spare?"

Again no answer came.

Talk outside of the business in hand the owner evidently had no intention of making.

Old King Brady mounted his horse and rode up the gorge. Speaking of eyes; the old detective's were everywhere.

He saw nothing of the guard, however.

This was not at all strange.

The trail ran through a mass of broken rocks.

The detective had never seen a better place to hide.

It was just as the voice had said.

There might be fifty pairs of eyes watching, and yet none to be seen by the traveler up the gorge.

Old King Brady kept on for nearly a mile.

The steep, rocky ascent continued.

He was not challenged again.

He did get a warning word, however, at one point.

Old King Brady stopped at a place where the trail divided into two parts.

He was doubtful which turn to take.

All at once a voice called out:

"To the right, old man! To the right; then you won't be wrong."

"Thank you," cried Old King Brady.

He tried the tobacco dodge again.

No result.

The voice did not make itself heard again.

Still pushing forward, the detective suddenly came out on top of the rise.

He was by this time far up in the Dome Rock Range.

There were no trees here.

The long, broad ridge which he had reached was strewn with great rocks as far as the eye could reach.

At the back of the ridge, about a mile away, another series of dome-like peaks rose.

The view down on the desert was very extensive.

Old King Brady could see the Colorado River winding over the sandy plain.

Badtown seemed to lie at his feet.

There were one or two distant settlements in sight.

Old King Brady knew that one of these must be Norton's.

As he continued to look, he could see Dirty James' stage or somebody's stage, at least, just pulling away from the place.

"Where am I expected to go next, I wonder?" thought Old King Brady, turning his attention to the rocks around him.

The thought had no more than crossed his mind when a young girl dressed in a sort of hunting suit and carrying a rifle, stepped out into view.

She was young and decidedly good-looking.

At first sight Old King Brady thought she was Maggie Hynes, the singer from the Howling Coyote.

As he looked again he saw that she was an entirely different person.

The girl started back at the sight of the detective.

The rifle which she carried was raised for the moment.

"Who are you?" she called out. "How did you get in here?"

"I was passed in by the guards, miss," replied Old King Brady, raising his hat.

"Passed in by the guards? What do you want?"

"I am only a poor miner looking for work. I want to see Mr. Mellor."

"I am Mr. Mellor's daughter."

"Indeed! Perhaps you will guide me to him?"

"I can't do that. It is against the orders."

Just then a shot was fired.

Old King Brady pretended to be very much afraid.

"Are they trying to kill me?" he cried. "I had better get out of this!"

"No no; it's all right. That was only a signal to me."

"Oh! A signal?"

"Yes."

"What are they signaling you about?"

"That was to tell me that you are all right, and are to be allowed to go on."

"Oh!"

"Yes."

"Won't you ride and let me walk?"

"No, no; that is not necessary. Tell me who you are and



low you came to be here. It is not very often that we see anyone in from the outside world."

Old King Brady told his story as they moved on along the ridge.

As he made it up to suit the occasion, it was just about right.

He observed that Miss Mellor—Minnie was her name, as he learned later—listened with close attention.

She asked him a lot of questions about himself.

"You look like a kind-hearted old man," she burst out at last.

"I hope I have a kind heart, miss," the detective replied. "I have had trouble enough, the dear knows, to make me feel kindly toward all men."

"Trouble don't always do that, sir."

"I know that, too."

"I have had lots of trouble. I'm in trouble now," said the girl, lowering her voice.

"What trouble?"

"Oh, if I only dared to tell you—to ask your help!"

"You can speak to me freely."

"Not here; not now; we may be overheard. There! See! What did I say?"

A man suddenly stepped out into view from behind a big boulder.

He was armed with a rifle, and in his buckskin coat and cowboy hat looked very fierce.

Old King Brady recognized him as one of the men who had joined in the Howling Coyote raid.

This was the notorious tough, Tony the Greaser, as Old King Brady afterward learned.

"I don't know anything about him, Tony," Minnie Mellor hastened to call out.

"I know all that is needed to know, senorita," growled Tony. "This way, you!"

Old King Brady could only follow the Greaser.

Meanwhile Minnie glided in among the rocks and disappeared.

"Captain how are you?" said Old King Brady, saluting. "Have you a little terbacker about you. I am just dying for a chew."

Tony was more pliable than the rest, it seemed.

He produced a plug and passed it over to the detective.

Old King Brady helped himself liberally.

"You have saved my life," he remarked, as he handed back the plug.

"Say, if you don't give a pretty slick account of yerself, that will be your last chew, old man," remarked Tony.

"This way!"

He wound in and out among the rocks.

Presently they began to descend into a deep hollow.

A moment more, and having passed clear of the rocks, Old King Brady saw a number of rough frame buildings on ahead.

"Is that the Eureka Mine?" he asked.

"That's the Eureka," Tony growled.

"Good enough!"

"Or bad enough. We will soon find out which."

"I want to see Mr. Mellor."

"You'll see him. Better call him Matt Mellor, though; he don't like being mistered none."

"That was his daughter up there?"

"Never mind."

"A blamed pretty girl."

"Never mind, I tell you."

"Say, I don't seem to set well on your stomach, friend."

Tony the Greaser laughed and showed his teeth!

"We don't go much on strangers here," he said, "but we do want men to help us work the mine."

"And I am looking for a mine to help work in. I think we ought to come together on this all right."

"We'll see. It will depend on yourself."

"How do you mean?"

"Say, I'm talking too much, and may get called down for it, but I will say this: don't you be scared when——"

"When what? Why don't you finish?"

"Wait. We are right at the mine now."

They had drawn very close to the group of buildings.

A number of rough-looking men could be seen moving about.

They did not pay the least attention to Old King Brady, which he thought was rather strange.

All at once Tony the Greaser gave a shout and made for the biggest of the buildings on the run.

"A spy! A spy!" he yelled. "We have him dead to rights now! Spy! Spy!"

Anyone would have been startled by this turn of affairs.

Old King Brady reined in his horse and sat perfectly still.

In an instant armed men came dashing out from among the buildings, from behind the rocks, from all about him.

"Spy! Spy! Kill the spy!" they shouted.

A dozen rifles covered Old King Brady now.

Yet there the old detective sat on the horse, calm and undisturbed, to all outward appearance.

"Say, what's the matter with all you fellers?" he drawled. "I don't see no spy."

## CHAPTER VII.

### HARRY GOES INTO PARTNERSHIP WITH JUDGE IZARD.

"Give me your hand, young man. I've changed my mind. I'll save you from them falls."

This was the most cheerful word Young King Brady had heard in a long time.

With the revolver covering him, and the falls right ahead he had been rather puzzled to know what to do.

The man with the high hat seized him by the extended hand and also by the hair as he flew past.

"Oh! Ah! Ouch! Great Scott! You hurt!" cried Young King Brady, as he was dragged out of the stream.

"Salvation for sinners! It will do you good!" cried the man, landing Harry on the rocky floor of a small cave.

"Ha, ha, ha! If you don't like my way of doing business, what did you come here for—hey?"



There was a fire burning in the cave, and somewhere overhead daylight came streaming in.

Young King Brady could see his strange rescuer plain enough.

The man was, perhaps, sixty years old.

He was tall, gaunt and wild-eyed.

He wore a shabby suit of black and a shabbier plug hat.

He looked like a broken down parson, lawyer, or something of the sort.

"Boy, who are you?"

"Just from the States. Came to Badtown to seek my fortune," replied Harry. "Will you mind if I strip and dry my clothes by your fire?" he added, pulling off his coat as he spoke.

"You can take off your skin and stand in your bones for all I care," retorted the old man.

Harry lost no time in stripping to the buff.

Spreading his wet garments by the fire, he sat down on the stone floor, crossed his legs and calmly lit a cigarette.

"Hello! Don't you feel cold?" asked the old man.

"Not now. I did with my wet clothes on."

"Take this old coat of mine to sit on."

"Thank you. It will be a little softer. What's your name?"

"My name, young man, is Judge Izard. There!"

The judge folded his arms, threw out his chest, and posed.

"You don't mean it!" cried Harry, duly surprised, of course.

"Yes, sir; I am Judge Izard of Tucson."

"I never would have believed it!"

"You have heard of me, of course?"

"Why, of course."

"From your father, probably."

"My uncle."

"Yes, yes. It is some years since I was on the bench. Hardly in your time. Salvation for sinners! When I first struck Tucson you were hardly hatched."

Harry began to feel afraid that he had been a little too quick in recognizing the judge, whose fame had never reached him until now.

But he soon discovered that so long as he let Judge Izard talk, it made very little difference what he said himself.

"Yaas," drawled the judge, "I was right in it down to Tucson about the time you were born, boy, but I'm dead out of it now, or you wouldn't ketch me hiding in this cave."

"I should say not," replied Harry. "Have a cigarette?"

"Don't mind if I do."

"Help yourself. You may have the whole pack if you want it."

"Got another?"

"Yes."

"I don't care much about hittin' them coffin nails as a rule."

"Nor I. But when a fellow hasn't got anything else to smoke, what is he going to do?"

"That's my case. You hain't got no whisky with you, I 'pose?"

"Not a drop. Never use the stuff."

"That's where you are wise; but I do. You see I have to. I'm a judge——"

"Of whisky, sir?"

"Salvation for sinners! Young fellow, don't you get too fresh, or we are going to have a falling out."

"I meant no harm at all, sir."

"Waal, I'll forgive you this time. Know why?"

"I'm not good at guessing."

"Because I want a partner and I think you are about the kind of fellow I need."

"Say, judge," laughed Harry, "if you want a partner who can put two cents and no more into the business, why, then, I am just your man. Ha, ha, ha!"

"I want just such a jolly fellow as you, and I don't care a blame about the cash," said the judge.

Then he began to question Harry closely.

The story that he got back seemed to satisfy him.

Young King Brady gave the name of Steve French.

He told a hard luck story, and told it in such a way that made it seem as if he was ready for anything.

"This scheme of mine isn't a bad one, boy," remarked Judge Izard at last, at the same time lighting a fresh cigarette.

"I believe I could stand for about anything the way I feel now. I wish you would explain."

"Well, I will. You understand, I'm a judge?"

"Yes, sir."

"You didn't say 'of whisky' that time. If you had I should have rapped you over the head."

"Go on."

"Besides being a judge, I am also a lawyer."

"Judges usually are."

"Not always in Arizona. That remark shows your ignorance."

"I acknowledge the corn."

"I accept your apology."

"It was not intended for an apology, but you can call it so if you wish."

"Hold up, now. No fencing. I want to get ahead here."

"Go on."

"I've been practicing at the bar in Badtown for the last few months."

"Before or behind the bar, judge?"

Harry just couldn't help saying it.

"Gee whiz!" roared the judge. "I'll make you sweat for that!"

He made a spring for Harry.

Young King Brady sprang to his feet and skipped off into the depths of the cave, laughing heartily.

"Judge, I really beg your pardon. Let me come back and I promise to be good!" he called out.

"Salvation for sinners! If you don't come back and behave yourself, I'll chuck your clothes in the fire!" bawled the judge.

This brought Harry back in a hurry, and peace was declared for the time being, at all events.

"Now, boy, listen to me in sober earnest," said Judge Izard, "and don't you interrupt me again. I've got a big



scheme on hand, and being an old man, I don't feel quite equal to carrying it out. What I need is help—some one to stand by me—some young fellow like you."

"As you said before, you want a partner, judge."

"That's it."

"Well, I'm with you. Go on."

Then Judge Izard got down to business.

The story he told was much more interesting to Young King Brady than he supposed it was going to be.

It appeared that Judge Izard had opened an office in Badtown some months before, where he started in to practice law.

A few weeks before Matt Mellor called upon him and told him the whole story of the Eureka Mine.

The rascally superintendent kept nothing back.

He told just how he had stolen the mine and all about it.

He explained the whole situation, and wound up by asking Judge Izard's advice as to how he could get legal possession of the property.

The judge advised him to forge a bill of sale from Mr. Bassett, transferring the mine land to him, and dating the same back three years.

The judge was to appear as witness, and had agreed to swear to the genuineness of the bill of sale.

For this service he was to receive a quarter interest in the mine and two thousand dollars in cash.

All was arranged to carry out the rascally scheme, but on the day fixed Matt Mellor failed to put in an appearance, and Judge Izard had not seen him since.

To this astonishing confession Harry listened in absolute silence.

He saw that he had run up against a very important person in the case upon which he was working.

Well," he said, when the judge had ceased to speak, "and what do you intend to do? What's your scheme?"

"My scheme is revenge!" hissed the judge.

His whole manner was tigerish in its fierceness.

Harry returned to his original estimate of this strange man.

He made up his mind that Judge Izard was decidedly insane.

"I'd want to be revenged if I was in your place," he said.

"Wouldn't you?" cried the judge. "Wouldn't any man? Of course they would."

"What do you propose?"

"To play into the hands of the real owner of the land."

"This man Bassett?"

"Yes."

"How will you do it?"

"Easy enough. We will find out where the mine is. We will get proof against this fellow Mellor and his partner, Happy Jack Hyer. We will write Mr. Bassett and offer these proofs for cash."

"Good scheme, but where do I come in?"

"You will help me find the mine."

"Oh, then you don't know just where it is?"

"No; and what's more, I'm lost."

"Well, so am I."

"We must find ourselves."

"All right."

"You will work in with me, French?"

"Sure, if you wish it."

"I do."

"It's a bargain."

"We go halves in this."

"That's fair."

"Shake, then. Steve French and Judge Izard are partners from this on."

While Harry dressed himself, he and the judge had some further talk.

There was no question about the old man being weak-minded.

That he was a great scoundrel was equally certain.

Harry joked him into the best of humor, and then they began to discuss the best way of getting out of the cave.

"Question is, how did you get in it, judge?" Young King Brady at first remarked.

"I go to show you, my boy, and to prove to you that it will do you no earthly good to know."

The judge then lighted his lantern, which he had carefully extinguished when daylight began to come, and led the way back into the cave.

They soon came out into the light.

A section of the rock had fallen in about twenty feet in width.

Part of one side was gone, too, and here there was a narrow trail leading down the mountain.

"That's the way I came up," said the judge. "So you see I am lost so far as finding the mine is concerned."

"The trail to the mine lies further on," said Harry, alluding to his trumped-up story again.

"But we can't go back through the water," he added.

"No," said the judge; "I can't and won't. Partner, you will have to think of some other way."

"The cave takes a turn here and runs in the same direction as the stream. Suppose we follow on that way?"

"I'm with you. Probably it won't amount to anything, but I will stick to you to the death."

They pushed on still further into the recesses of the cave.

A walk of half an hour brought them to the end of the cave.

Here it narrowed down so that there was barely room for Young King Brady and the judge to stand together.

"Salvation for sinners!" cried the judge, bursting out with his favorite exclamation. "Here we are at the end of our rope."

"That's what. Why, judge, look here!"

Young King Brady had made a discovery.

They were not the first to explore the depths of the cave.

On the ground lay two sledge hammers and a crowbar.

The remains of a fire was here also, and there were little piles of broken stone which had been pounded fine with the hammers.

"Prospecting!" cried the judge. "This is worth looking into, partner."



He took up one of the sledge hammers and slung it over his head, striking the rock at the end of the cave.

It gave back a hollow sound.

"Salvation for sinners!" cried the judge. "We are not at the end of our rope yet, partner. There's more cave beyond this, if we could only get on the other side of this wall."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### OLD KING BRADY GETS ON MATT MELLOR'S BLIND SIDE.

If Old King Brady had shown the slightest sign of fear he would have been instantly shot.

This rush upon him was merely to test the old man.

The old detective sat there on his horse as cool as a cucumber

"Where is the spy? I don't see no spy," he kept saying.

"Boss!" he called out to Tony the Greaser, "what's all this row about?"

Tony laughed.

Then a tall man, with an immense head and a heavy black mustache, appeared at the door of the larger house.

"That will do, boys," he called out. "You may bring him in here."

"Matt Mellor!" thought Old King Brady. "I have penetrated to the very root of the mystery. Here I am at the lost gold mine. Now what is coming next?"

There was a lot coming, if Old King Brady had only known it.

He was to have all he wanted to do for the next few days.

Dismounting, the detective was led into a sort of office by Tony the Greaser.

It was decently furnished. There were pictures on the walls, and two handsome desks.

The tall man waved Tony the Greaser out of the place and then closed the door.

Then he drew a revolver, thrust it into Old King Brady's face and looked him straight in the eye.

It was a terrible ordeal.

Old King Brady never even winked.

He saw in this a final test of his courage.

He was right.

After a moment the man lowered the weapon, and thrusting it into his pocket, said:

"You're no coward, whoever you are."

"Not only that," said the detective, "but if you had shot me I shouldn't have cared."

"Why do you say that?"

"I say it because I am tired of life."

"You are dressed like a miner, but you speak like a man of education and intelligence."

"I am all of that. I have done mining, too."

"What's your name?"

"Of late I have posed under the name of Old Joe Ric. My real name is Joseph Decker, sir."

"And your object in coming up here was to get work as a miner?"

"Yes."

"Understand, my man, from the moment you were challenged in the gorge you were in my power. Word was passed from one of my scouts to another, until it reached me that you were coming forward."

"Yes, sir."

"If you had shown the slightest fear you would have been instantly shot."

"Yes, sir."

"We want only brave men with us, and such fare well at my hands."

"Yes, sir. So the watchman at the Badtown Smelting Works said."

"He told the truth. He is in my pay."

"Yes, sir. You are Matt Mellor, I take it."

"That's my name. What do you know about mining? Enough to superintend a gang of men?"

"I think so," replied Old King Brady.

He knew so.

Earlier in his life the old detective had worked at mining, and this more than once.

"How well do you write?" asked Mellor, suddenly.

Old King Brady stepped up to one of the desks and gave him a sample of his work.

"Good!" exclaimed Mellor. "What do you know about bookkeeping?"

"I am a good bookkeeper, sir."

"Humph! Did the watchman tell you that we were running this mine in a peculiar way?"

"He said something to that effect."

"How much did he tell you?"

"Oh, not very much. He just said that you were having trouble with the eastern stockholders; that was all."

"Yes. Now look here, Decker. What I want is a confidential man whom I can trust. If I can find such a man I will make him a millionaire. I want a man who knows more of business than I do. I want a man who won't hesitate to do as he is told, and who has no curiosity, do you understand?"

The detective nodded.

"Of course, I can't trust you off-hand."

"Certainly not."

"I want to know you better. Stop around here with me for a few weeks. Show what you can do, and if you prove yourself all right, you won't regret it. Now that's my story. Get your breakfast. You will be shown to your room, and later in the morning I'll show you the mine."

"Mr. Mellor, you can trust me," said Old King Brady, simply.

"I believe it," replied Mellor, shaking hands.

Matt Mellor was a shrewd villain, but this time he had made a mistake.

Old King Brady found him more of an educated man than he had expected.

He sized up the situation correctly, as he usually did.

Mellor's success with the stolen mine had made him enemies.

Here he was turning out gold by the hatful, but what



he wanted was to pose as a mine owner and a millionaire. This he could not do with such men around him as Happy Jack Hyer and his gang.

Old King Brady was now turned over to a young man who took him up-stairs and showed him a comfortably furnished room.

"That's for you," he said. "Now, if you want breakfast come with me."

He led the way to a dining-room on the ground floor.

One or two men were eating at a long table.

A Chinaman was waiting on them, and another could be seen through the open door of a kitchen, which opened off the dining-room.

Old King Brady sat down at the table, and the Chinaman served him with a comfortable meal.

After breakfast the detective went out on the piazza for an hour or more.

Men came and went, but paid no attention to him.

Old King Brady was able to study the situation on the outside to his heart's content.

There was plenty going on at the mine.

The main shaft was under a small frame building.

Next to this was an engine-house, and the puffing of steam was constantly heard.

Men were engaged in hoisting ore.

The clank of the hoisting machine was incessant.

The ore was being wheeled in barrows into a long, low building, where it was dumped.

Beyond this building was a large barn.

Beyond the barn, on a little patch of green watered by the mountain stream, a number of mules were feeding.

Beyond this patch was a small building of stone which was solid enough for a jail.

Old King Brady wondered if Harry and Mr. Bassett were confined there.

If he had dared he would have gone over to this building and inspected it.

He remembered what Matt Mellor had said about curiosity, however.

By doing this he was afraid of spoiling all.

The detective had just filled his pipe for the third time when the office door opened and Matt Mellor came out.

He wore a big, white hat, and was in his shirt sleeves, for the day had turned out very warm.

"Well, Decker, how have they been using you?" he asked abruptly.

"I've had the first square meal, sir, that I've eaten in a month; I've had two good smokes with a bit of tobacco one of your men gave me, and feel comfortable. I'm ready to go to work any time."

"Come and see my mine," said Mellor, in his abrupt way. "I want your idea."

"Old King Brady rose and followed him.

"We have two shifts here, Decker," said Mellor. "One is where they are hoisting. That's the only one that pays. The other is a new shaft which I sank last fall. We went down a hundred and twenty feet on the quartz vein, expecting to strike gold, but we have not struck even a color

yet. I have not been able to tell whether the ore body lies off to the right or the left. Perhaps you can help me out."

He might have asked a worse man.

While Old King Brady certainly could not claim to be an expert miner, he still had considerable experience in that line, as has already been said.

They walked on to a smaller shaft house about a hundred feet distant from the one where the hoisting machine was.

There was no hoist here.

The descent of the shaft had to be made on ladders locked together.

It was hard work for Old King Brady.

His head was spinning like a top when he got to the end of that one hundred and twenty feet.

"You stood that well for so heavy a man," remarked Mellor, flashing a lantern which he had brought with him into the detective's face.

"I'm a little dizzy, that's all."

"There ought to be a hoist here. I should put one in, but I don't care to go to the expense until we have struck something."

"You are not working here now?"

"No; we haven't been since last fall. What do you think of it?"

Old King Brady took the lantern in his own hand and flashed it around.

There was the vein of white quartz running straight down through black slate rock.

There was not a sign of gold in it that he could see.

Now, Old King Brady is certainly one of the luckiest men on earth.

He was just about to remark that it did not look very promising, when his sharp eyes suddenly caught the glitter of gold in the vein away down near the bottom of the shaft, on the right hand side, as he stood.

"I think I see my chance," thought the old detective.

He had already observed that Matt Mellor was decidedly short-sighted, and he felt sure there was little chance of his seeing the gold specks in the vein unless his attention was particularly called to it.

Old King Brady began to talk learnedly about mines and mining.

Matt Mellor joined in freely.

He recognized Old King Brady as a man of intelligence, and he was glad to hear what he had to say.

"Then you wouldn't give up here if this was your property?" said Mellor.

"No, indeed," replied Old King Brady. "I think this shaft may be made to pay yet."

"Which would you do, sink the shaft deeper or drift in the sides?"

"Let me see," replied the detective.

He got down on his knees and examined the vein on both sides with close attention.

"I believe I would put in a blast right here," he said, pointing to the place where he had discovered the gold.

"I shall take your advice," said Mellor.



"The rock is a little loose here," continued Old King Brady. "Just hold that drill for me, boss. I think we can pry a bit of the vein rock off and see what it has to show further in."

Old King Brady seized the drill and drove it into a narrow crack in the vein.

Mr. Mellor then took hold, while Old King Brady taking up the sledge began "striking" as it is called.

"You strike like an old hand at the business, Decker," said Mellor.

"I am an old hand."

"It isn't all old hands who can strike as well."

"I'd like to make a big strike while I'm about it."

"I wish you might. You wouldn't lose anything by it if you did."

"I believe you. I think you are a square man."

"I return the compliment."

"But you don't know me, boss."

"I know you as well as you know me. I can size up a man by his looks and his talk."

"Can you?" thought Old King Brady. "My life wouldn't be worth much if that was true."

He stopped striking a few minutes later.

"Now then, boss, let's see if we can pry off a bit of that vein rock!" he exclaimed.

They both laid hold of the drill and pulled with all their strength.

The result was even better than Old King Brady had expected.

A big piece of the rock came flying off.

"Holy smoke! Look here, Decker!" Matt Mellor fairly shouted.

He stooped down and picked up a few of the loose pieces of rock.

They were fairly bristling with gold.

"Well, I declare!" cried Old King Brady.

"Show a light here on the big piece," called Mellor excitedly.

The detective flashed the light down.

It was the same with this piece, and still the same in the vein from which it had been broken.

Here was Old King Brady's wonderful luck again.

He had turned the barren shaft into a mine which promised great thing.

"Well, well, well!" cried Mellor. "You've got a great head, old man! You know your business! That's one thing sure!"

"Well, I have had some little experience in mining, as I told you," said Old King Brady, modestly.

"Little experience! Why it's science. That's what it is; downright science! You made no mistake in coming up here, Decker. Your fortune is made all right."

And so Matt Mellor went on for some time.

All the while he was hammering at the broken piece of rock, breaking it into smaller pieces.

"Hark!" exclaimed Old King Brady, suddenly. "What noise was that?"

"The echo of my hammer," replied Mellor. "Why?"

"Why! Because it wasn't the echo of your hammer."

"You're right. There it goes again. What can it mean?"

The sound came from over in one corner of the shaft.

It was muffled to be sure, but it was unmistakably the ring of a hammer.

"This is most mysterious," exclaimed Mellor. "I can't understand it at all."

"Is there no cave behind this wall?" asked the detective.

"Not that I know of."

"Still there must be somebody behind there."

"That's right, too; and whoever it is knows how to swing the hammer pretty well."

"He's doing some pretty powerful pounding."

"That's what. Hello! The rock is beginning to crack."

"They will be through it in a minute, whoever they are."

Matt Mellor was as puzzled as Old King Brady.

Perhaps the reader may guess what is coming.

But it must be remembered that Old King Brady believed Harry to be a prisoner in one of the buildings of the mine.

Fancy his astonishment then when a big mass of rock came tumbling into the shaft, and then he saw Harry's face peering in through the breach.

Standing beside him was an old man with chin whiskers and a shabby tall hat.

Old King Brady has just time to make a sign to Harry not to recognize him when Matt Mellor sprang forward shouting:

"By Judas, it's Judge Izard! You old scoundrel, how came you in there?"

## CHAPTER IX.

### OLD KING BRADY PLAYS A DESPERATE GAME.

"Salvation for sinners! If it ain't Matt Mellor! Burn me alive if this ain't a surprise!" cried Judge Izard, drawing himself up to his full height and posing behind the hole in the wall.

Old King Brady stood motionless and silent.

He had a part to play here.

That part was to make it appear that all this was a matter of perfect indifference to him, and he played it well.

Young King Brady on the other side of the breach stood leaning on the sledge-hammer.

Like his partner Harry was saying nothing at all.

"None of your fool talk, Judge!" cried Mellor, whipping out a revolver. "You know my way of doing business. Step in here."

"Certainly," replied the judge.

"Right smart, now. Who's this boy?"

"This boy, sir, is my young friend Steve French. French,



my boy, this gentleman is the Hon. Mathew Mellor, Esquire. Mellor is the owner of these mines."

Thus saying, Judge Izard threw one of his long legs through the breach.

The other followed it, and the judge stood in front of the revolver in the new shaft.

"You too, French!" cried Mellor savagely.

"All right, boss," said Harry.

Mellor flashed the lantern on him when he came into the shaft, surveying him from head to foot.

"Humph!" he cried. "I reckon I know something about you if I haven't seen you before."

"If you do it's more than I do, Matt," said the judge. "He's a stranger to me."

"Shut up! Speak when you are spoken to! Boy, you were captured in the Howling Coyote down at Badtown last night."

"That's true," said Harry quietly.

"You escaped from my men on the way up here."

"True again."

"You dove into the pool and pretended to be drowned."

"I didn't say anything about being drowned. I wanted to get away and I tried my best."

"Oh, you little liar!" cried the judge. "You told me altogether a different story from that."

"I don't tell all I know," said Harry. "I'd be a fool if I did."

"Enough!" cried Mellor. "I'll attend to your case later. Now then, Judge, what brought you here?"

"Well, Matt and I were just searching around. I didn't know you lived in here or I wouldn't have knocked on your door, you bet."

"I judge not, Judge."

"Salvation for sinners, no!"

"You treacherous hound, what's in behind there?"

"A cave, your honor."

"Where does it lead to?"

"Through to a rushing stream called Badtown Creek, your royal highness."

"Enough of that unless you want me to blow the top of your head off. The whole truth of the matter is you were snooping about in the Dome Rock range trying to locate the mine. You know it blamed well."

"Matt, I won't deny it."

"It would be no use. Never mind. Now that you are here you have got to do my bidding. Just draw up that transfer, Judge."

"Why, certainly, my dear boy. I'll sign it too if you say so."

"It's not necessary. Know why?"

"Indeed I don't."

"I have Decimus Bassett a prisoner here at this very moment!"

"Gee whiz! You don't say so!" Judge Izard cried.

"Up the ladder with you! We will explore this cave later, Decker. Put that boy up ahead of you. Jack Hyer want to do him up for a rough turn he served him on the road, I believe."

"Stand ready to go up that ladder, boy," said Old King Brady, seizing Harry roughly by the arm.

"Don't pull a fellow about so," growled Harry. "I'm not going to try to escape."

"You better not think of it," said Mellor; "that is if you want to live. And as for you, Judge, tell you right now I'll do you up if you make the least effort to leave this place until I give the word."

Matt Mellor went up the ladder then.

The judge followed.

He was puffin like a grampus when he reached the top.

Twice he came near falling and his plug hat actually did fall off.

"My hat! my hat! I must go back after it!" he cried.

"If you don't come on I'll send your head after your hat!" Mellor said.

"Don't worry, Judge, your hat has landed on my head!" called Harry, for such was the case.

Landed at the top of the shaft himself, Mellor dragged the judge up to the house and ordered him into the office.

"You stay there till I come," he snarled. "Remember, you are being watched every instant of the time you are here."

"Yours truly, Matt. I know you and your ways pretty well," retorted the judge as he went through the office door.

"He's a bad one, Decker," remarked Matt Mellor. "I've known him for years. Bring that boy this way. Here's our jail. I'm going to show it to you. We have several prisoners in there."

He led the way to the stone house, and Old King Brady led Harry after him.

A guard stood at the door with a rifle.

He saluted Mellor and opened the door.

Mellor led the way into a sizeable room.

Here were the prisoners.

There was Mr. Bassett and a young man easily recognizable as his son.

Old King Brady rather expected to see the actress, Maggie Hynes, but she was not there.

"Now then, young fellow, you'll stop here till Happy Jack comes back," said Mellor. "Make yourself at home. You'll find a sleeping bunk up in the loft at the top of that ladder. Bassett—old Bassett I mean—step this way."

Mr. Decimus Bassett came forward with dignified tread.

"What is it you want?" he demanded. "Have you decided to release me and my son?"

"Yes, on the same conditions I put to you when you came in."

"I will never accede to them."

"I shall give you three days to think about it."

"If you give me three y ars it would be just the same."

"And then if you still refuse you die!" continued Mellor. "Come, Decker, we are through here."

They left the prison together, and that was all Old King Brady saw of the prisoners for the next two days.



There seemed to be absolutely no chance to get at them or to make any move to help out the situation.

It was mines and only mines.

The cave was explored; several big blasts were put in the new shaft.

The result confirmed Old King Brady's discoveries.

A rich vein of gold ore had been found.

Everybody was wild over it.

Old King Brady was stationed in the new shaft and kept busy there.

Judge Izard was placed in charge of the office, and every time the detective saw him he was busy writing at one of the desks.

Happy Jack and his men were away somewhere and did not show up at the end of the second day. There was no chance to get near the prisoners for the guard was always pacing up and down in front of the prison.

Occasionally Old King Brady saw the girl Minnie Mellor.

She did not speak, but each time she gave him a beseeching look which the detective could not altogether understand.

Such was the situation when Old King Brady retired to bed late in the evening on the second day.

The detective did not remove his clothes, but just lay down on the outside of the bed.

The fact was, Old King Brady had formed a desperate resolve.

Certain words which passed between Matt Mellor and Judge Izard had brought him to this determination.

In order to down Mellor and serve Mr. Bassett in his fight for the gold mine it was necessary to get absolute proof of the superintendent's rascality.

Old King Brady thought he saw a way of doing this and of doing it that very night.

When the detective went to his bedroom that night he left everyone else up.

It was to be a great night in the Eureka camp.

In honor of Old King Brady's discovery, Matt Mellor had given his men leave to have a little celebration.

There was to be a dance in the big dining room.

Maggie Hynes, who, as the detective previously learned, didn't seem to mind her present situation very much, was to give an exhibition of her skill as a danseuse for the benefit of the miners.

There was to be a supper at midnight and plenty of whisky and beer.

Shortly after midnight Happy Jack and his men were expected to come into camp and join in the festivities.

Music was to be furnished by two of the miners, one playing the fiddle and another the accordeon.

Altogether it was to be a regular fandango, and the order had gone out that there was to be no business next day.

Of course Old King Brady was invited to join in the festivities.

The shrewd old detective had completely won over Matt Mellor.

The rascally superintendent had not the least suspicion of him.

So when Old King Brady gave out that he was tired and did not care to join in the dance, not a word of objection was raised.

The racket had already begun when Old King Brady lay down upon the bed.

It was about ten o'clock and the miners had been filling up on whisky and beer since eight.

The squeak of the fiddle, the wheezing of the accordeon, and the shuffle of feet could be distinctly heard in the room below.

One of the miners was bawling a comic song; loud voices were breaking in upon it every minute.

There was a high old time in the dining-room and a shrewd old man listening to it all upstairs.

"It's to-night or never," thought Old King Brady. "It's a desperate chance though. If I am caught I'm as good as dead, and even if I catch him I by no means have the game in my own hands."

For half an hour Old King Brady lay there listening.

At last he heard shuffling footsteps in the passage outside, and a man entered the next room.

Old King Brady slipped off the bed and prepared for business.

The little room in which he stood was divided from the next one merely by a rough board partition.

One of these boards had been carefully loosened by the detective earlier in the day.

At the crack between this board and the next the detective stood listening to the sounds in the next room.

In a few minutes somebody threw himself on the bed.

"He's going to snooze until Mellor calls him," muttered Old King Brady. "The time had come for me to act. It is the beginning of a desperate business. I wonder where it will end?"

Very softly he drew the board aside.

There lay Judge Izard on the cot-bed. His coat was off and his face was turned against the wall.

Tiptoeing forward in his stocking feet Old King Brady approached the bed.

The judge heard him, however.

"Who is there?" he exclaimed, suddenly raising up.

With a cat-like spring Old King Brady caught him by the throat with his left hand.

"Help! Murder!" gasped the judge.

It was his last squeak.

Old King Brady was ready for him.

Quick as lightning he clapped a handkerchief well saturated with chloroform to his nose.

There was a faint struggle and the judge fell back senseless upon the pillow.

Old King Brady flew to the door and shot the bolt.

Then returning to the bed he picked up the judge, dragged him through the breach and laid him upon the bed in his own room.

Rapid work followed.



In size and general appearance Judge Izard bore considerable resemblance to Old King Brady.

It was this fact which suggested to the detective the desperate game he was about to play.

In a few moments he had donned Judge Izard's clothes, and by the aid of false chin whiskers drawn from his inexhaustible store of disguising materials Old King Brady appeared as the very double of the judge.

"I think I'll do," he murmured, looking into the cracked looking-glass.

He turned a white powder into a tumbler, poured water upon it and forced it down the judge's throat.

"There!" he muttered, "that will help you sleep until morning."

Then he drew the covers over the unconscious man, slipped into the other room, adjusted the board, unbolted the door and lay down upon the cot.

Here he remained the best part of an hour listening to the wild revels below stairs.

At last, when the uproar seemed to have reached its height footsteps were heard in the corridor and the door was softly opened.

"Judge! Judge! I want you now!" Matt Mellor's voice was heard calling.

Old King Brady's answer was a deep snore.

## CHAPTER X

### JUST IN TIME TO BE TOO LATE.

"Wake up there, Judge! Wake up! It's time for business now!"

"Wha—what's the matter? That you, Matt? Gosh, I must have been asleep!"

Old King Brady had been practising Judge Izard's twist of tongue as he lay there waiting, and he flattered himself that he had it down fine.

No one but Old King Brady could have done it.

Matt Mellor was completely deceived.

"You've been bilting the stuff," he growled as the detective yawned, stretched and got up off the bed.

"No, I haven't, but you have," was the reply.

"I don't deny it. The boys are having a high old time. Put on your coat, come down into the office, and we will get on the move right now."

Old King Brady followed Mellor down into the office, where the gas was lighted and the shades drawn down.

"Don't you think you had better go over it once more to make sure it will hold water?" asked Mellor, producing a legal-looking document from one of the drawers of the desk.

"I think I had," replied Old King Brady.

He wanted no better chance.

"By close shadowing, listening and watching Old King Brady had learned enough to make him able to handle the situation now.

Mellor lit a cigar and threw himself in a chair after he handed over the paper.

"I'll read it carefully through once more," said Old King Brady.

"That's what you had better do," was the reply. "We don't want to make any mistakes."

Putting on a pair of eyeglasses belonging to Judge Izard through which he had hard work to decipher the writing, Old King Brady went at it.

The paper was simply a transfer of the whole Dome Rock range tract of land to Mathew Mellor for the consideration of the sum of \$300,000.

It was drawn up in good legal style and lacked only the signature of Mr. Bassett.

Having finished reading it, Old King Brady folded up the paper and laid it on the desk.

Mellor had been drinking more heavily than he had supposed.

The man had fallen asleep in his chair.

"Oh, you scoundrel!" thought Old King Brady. "I wish I could read your mind! I wish I knew how much talk you and the judge had made about this!"

Fact was Old King Brady was rather puzzled to know what to say about the document.

He was relieved of all this in a moment, however.

"Matt!" he called. "Wake up!"

"Who's asleep?" growled Mellor, rousing from his snooze.

"You are?"

"You lie!"

"Oh, have it your own way. Salvation for sinners! If you weren't asleep then I don't know nothing."

"Say, old man, you have got a queer croak in your voice to-night."

"I've got a cold," Old King Brady hastened to say.

He thought then that he was on the verge of discovery.

The danger, however, quickly passed.

"Well," said Mellor. "What do you think of your work?"

"It's all right."

"Then I suppose you would like to know what my plan is about it?"

"Naturally I would."

Fortune was favoring the detective.

So it was not going to be necessary for him to make any talk.

"Well, I'll tell you," said Mellor. "I'm going to bring Decimus Bassett in here and make him sign that paper, and then I shall run him and his son and that other young feller down the gorge a little way and shoot 'em and drop their bodies into the ravine."

"Good!"

"It's the only way, and you shall help me do it."

"All right, Matt. Count on me, old man."

"You see, Judge," continued Mellor, "I want no witnesses. I want this job done before Happy Jack returns. I want to be able to lay the job at his door, and to be able to claim that I actually paid Bassett the money and that he was killed and robbed by outlaws. Don't stare. I



can do it. I'll fix it all so that this deed will stand law and no man can point his finger at Matt Mellor and say: 'You are a thief and a murderer.' Judge, I'm booked to be a millionaire! A Bonanza King! I shall get out of this god-forsaken country. I shall go to New York and join the Stock Exchange. I shall build me a big house on Fifth Avenue. I—but never mind. Enough said. Let's get down to business now."

"I should say it was enough said," grunted the bogus judge. "This counting one's chickens before they are hatched don't amount to much no how. Look here, Matt, you are planning to cut things blamed fine for yourself. Where do I come in in this deal?"

"Don't you bother your brains about that," retorted Mellor, with an evil leer. "You'll get your reward."

"He means to shoot me and throw me over into the ravine with the others," thought Old King Brady. "Upon my word, he's a cheerful sort of man!"

Roars of laughter, with shouts and snatches of song from the dining room broke the current of his thoughts.

"Come," said Mellor, "let's get old Bassett and fetch him in here. Don't make any noise, Judge. Keep quiet. This thing all wants to be done on the dead quiet. That's why I let the boys have their shindig to-night, you understand."

Mellor picked up a rifle and started for the door.

"If he gets on to me I'm a lost man unless I act quick," thought Old King Brady. "It will be a question of who shoots first. Oh, if I only had the chance to communicate with Harry so that we could act together. This has been a hard case for us. We have been separated from the very start."

He walked silently along with Mellor toward the prison.

"Is there no guard here to-night?" he asked.

"Burn it all, there should be! I can't understand it unless the fellow has sneaked into the house and joined in the shindig. I suppose that is what it is."

"No, no!"

"What do you mean?"

"Look there!"

"Oh, the fakir! I'd like to put a ball through his head!"

It was Tony the Greaser sitting on the ground backed up against the wall of the prison, sound asleep.

An empty whisky flask at his side told the story.

Things were being whooped up good and lively at the Eureka mine that night and no mistake.

"Let him alone," said Old King Brady. "He's no use to us as he is, and if this job is to be done on the quiet he better not be disturbed."

"You're right. I'd just like to do him, though."

"Don't bother, I say. Have you got a key to the door?"

"Yes."

"Do I go in with you or do I wait here?"

"Come in. I'd loan you a revolver so that you could help me out in case of trouble if you were not such a treacherous dog."

"Salvation for sinners, Matt, you are hard on me to-night."

"And haven't I a right to be. Didn't you go back on me in Badtown, where you swiped the money I advanced to start you in law practice and went on a howling spree?"

"Never mind about that now. What's the matter with the door?"

"This key won't turn, confound it. The lock is tampered, I suppose."

"Try the knob. It may be unfastened."

Old King Brady made the suggestion without thought. The result was startling.

"Great snakes! You are right. The door is unlocked!" Matt Mellor roared.

He threw it open and rushed into the prison, closely followed by Old King Brady.

"Thunder and guns! All gone!" he yelled.

The big room was deserted.

Things lay strewn about in confusion.

There was every evidence that the prisoners had made a hurried flight.

Matt Mellor's rage was awful.

He stormed and raved and made a rush for Tony the Greaser.

"Be careful! Don't make a fool of yourself!" cried Old King Brady.

He was terribly worried for Harry's sake.

He could not tell what it all meant.

"Out of my way!" bellowed Mellor. "You blamed old fossil! Do you dare to tell me what I shall do?"

In his rage he seized Old King Brady's chin whisker and gave it a yank.

Off it came in his hand.

"Jumping jack-rabbits! What's all this!" roared Mellor.

He reached for his revolver, but Old King Brady was too quick for him.

In an instant he had him covered.

"This is business!" he cried. "Up hands, Matt Mellor, or you die!"

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE ESCAPE.

While Old King Brady was doing much good work on the outside only to have his plans interfered with and upset at the finish, Harry was cooling his heels in the prison and berating his bad luck which prevented him from doing anything at all.

Mr. Bassett was inclined to take things very coolly.

"We are in no danger yet," he kept saying. "No danger at all. He'll show his hand first, and I have no idea of risking my own life or Billy's either. If it becomes necessary to abandon the mine to Matt Mellor, I'll do it, that's all."

Harry tried to be hopeful too.

He answered Mr. Bassett that Old King Brady would surely devise some scheme to set them free.



"You don't know the governor," he kept saying. "He has more resources than you can shake a stick at. Never say die so long as Old King Brady is on deck."

Harry did not know exactly what to make of Billy Bassett.

Father and son did not get on well together.

Bassett senior hauled Billy over the coals for allowing himself to be captured.

Bassett junior gave it to the old man good and plenty for being fool enough to come out to Badtown and risk his life and liberty.

"I was getting along all right until you came," he kept saying. "If you had only given me a few days more I would have been able to get out of this and bring you all the proofs against Mellor you want."

But when his father asked him what he meant by these remarks, Billy refused to say a word.

He did not take very kindly to Young King Brady.

The first day he would scarcely speak to him.

Late in the afternoon of the second day, when the old gentleman had gone up in the loft, Billy suddenly altered his tactics.

Of course he knew who Harry was.

Mr. Bassett had told him that.

"Look here, Brady," he said, suddenly turning on Harry, "can you keep a secret when it concerns your own interests?"

"Well, I'd be a fool if I couldn't," Harry replied.

"Well, are you a fool, then?"

"I hope not."

"I don't expect to stop here after to-night."

"What about it?"

"Did you see a girl outside there when they brought you in?"

"I did. There was one standing near the house."

"Black eyes, rather pretty?"

"That's it."

"Well, that's Matt Mellor's daughter. She's dead stuck on me."

"You don't say!"

"Yes. We have been corresponding ever since I was locked up in here."

"Is that so?"

"You bet. She sends notes in with the grub, and I manage to get the answers back to her with the empty dishes. I won't tell you just how."

"And what's the law about it all? Where does the secret come in?"

"She has agreed to set us free to-night and provide us with horses to take us down the mountain. She hates the life she leads here, and wants to get away from it. I've agreed to take her to the States and marry her. See?"

Billy was a conceited "sissy," and Young King Brady felt very much like telling him so to his face.

Still the matter was too serious to get up any disturbance.

"How does she mean to do it?" Harry asked.

Then Billy gave him the story of the fandango.

He knew all about it, so it seemed.

"Minnie is a little darling and I'm dead gone on her," he chuckled. "It won't do to let the governor know it, for he would be sure to kick, but I do mean to marry her just as soon as we get free."

"Do you know her at all?" asked Harry. "Have you seen her and talked with her, I mean?"

"Why, sure I have. She used to bribe the guard to let her in here before you and the governor came to interfere. To-night she will get him full and open the door for us. Of course I can't leave you behind. I couldn't be so mean as that. You will just have to go along with us I suppose."

"Oh, don't be afraid of my cutting you out," said Harry. "I'm glad you have the chance, but I won't go."

"What!"

"I say I shan't go."

"Do you mean to stay here and be killed? You will be sure to in the end."

"I'm not going to desert my partner."

"Oh, what difference does that make? Let him take care of himself."

Of course Young King Brady refused to listen to anything of the sort.

He spoke Billy fair, however, and approved of his plan.

"It's better for me to let them go," he said to himself.

"Once they are gone I'll find some way of getting at Mr. Brady, and then he shall decide whether it is best to light out or not."

But after all Young King Brady changed his mind on this point.

When Mr. Bassett came to be told of Billy's great scheme, as he was a little later, he insisted that Harry should go with them.

"You just must!" he declared. "You are working for me. Do you suppose I would ever trust myself to Billy and that girl? Not at all. Just think, she is planning to betray her father, and——"

"And, lad, do you know that I don't mean to betray you!" broke in Billy with a coarse laugh. "Spit it right out, governor. Say just what's in your mind."

"Well, then, there you are," said Mr. Bassett. "Brady, you must see me through with this. Your partner can surely take care of himself."

"Anywhere," said Harry. "Trust him."

"Then you will go?"

"Since you insist upon it—yes."

"Good enough!" said Billy. "I must confess I want you myself."

Night came on.

Supper was brought in as usual by one of the men.

After he had retired, Billy pulled off the bottom crust of the loaf of bread.

It had been cut and stuck together in some way.

There was a note hidden above the crust.

"Eleven o'clock is the time," declared Billy, hastily glancing at it.

And at eleven o'clock sure enough a key was heard to



turn in the lock of the outer door of their prison, and in walked Minnie Mellor, carrying a rifle in her hand.

"Quick! Don't lose an instant!" she said. "Follow me."

Minnie led them among the buildings clear of the camp. They saw Tony the Greaser lying drunk outside the door. They could hear the wild revelry in the big dining room as they passed the house.

There was a light in the office window, but the curtains were drawn, otherwise they would have seen Old King Brady disguised as Judge Izard talking with Matt Mellor.

Two minutes later the rascally superintendent, accompanied by the detective, came out of the house.

Without speaking a word Minnie led the way down the gorge.

There were no guards to fear to-night.

This girl had fixed them all.

She had visited each one in turn and brought him whisky.

Angry because they were not at the fandango the guards to a man tumbled into the trap.

The whisky had been drugged with laudanum.

The guards were all in a sound sleep.

At the first level below the ridge they came upon two horses hitched to a liveoak tree.

"Here we are," said Minnie. "We must mount and make for Badtown. It will be all plain sailing if we don't happen to run into Happy Jack."

She and Billy mounted one horse, and Young King Brady and Mr. Bassett took the other.

They wound their way down through the gorge until they came to the place where Harry had made his dive into the pool.

"You ought to remember this spot all right, Brady," remarked Mr. Bassett.

"Well, I do," replied Harry. "I was just thinking——"

"Hush!" called Minnie. "There is some one coming up the trail. If it is Happy Jack Hyer we are lost!"

## CHAPTER XII.

### LAUDANUM.

Like most men of his class Matt Mellor was a great coward.

He was ready enough to jam a six-shooter under another man's nose and bluster when he had the drop on his enemy, and he was equally ready to wilt when the tables were turned on him.

"Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" he cried. "You have the drop on me. I cave!"

"Throw down your guns and knives," said Old King Brady, sternly. "Be quick about it, or you may get it in the neck yet!"

Two revolvers and a long bowie knife were thrown at the detective's feet.

"More, more!" said Old King Brady. "The one in

your left-hand hip-pocket! Ha! You hesitate! One, two——"

"Oh, well, take it!" snarled Mellor, throwing a fine revolver down with the rest. "Who the blazes are you, anyhow. I'd just like to know."

"A man who knows his business," replied the detective, producing a pair of handcuffs. "Out with your hands to receive the bracelets. Lively now!"

This was Matt Mellor's chance if he was ever to have one again.

He did not take it.

The fact was the man was too drunk to make it safe to take any chances, and he knew just how drunk he was.

Old King Brady made short work of the rest.

He handcuffed Matt Mellor and he gagged him to prevent any signal from being given, and in the end he tied him on a horse, mounted behind him and started down the gorge.

"And all this time the revellers were whooping it up in the dining room, never dreaming of the misfortune which had befallen their chief.

Before gagging Matt Mellor Old King Brady gave him a big drink of whisky.

This fixed the superintendent—put him out of business, in fact.

From that time on he hardly knew what he was doing. Old King Brady had no trouble in getting the papers away from him. Mellor was helpless in his hands when they started down the gorge, and the time of their starting was the very time Young King Brady's party got the alarm about Happy Jack.

The alarm sounded more serious than it really was.

Minnie Mellor was a true child of the mountains.

She knew the Dome Rock Range thoroughly, and she knew her business, too.

"We have to turn off here," she hurriedly exclaimed, pointing to a narrow rift in the rock just about wide enough to let a horse pass through. "This way, Billy, dear."

"Billy, dear?" gasped Mr. Bassett. "What on earth does this mean?"

It was a slip of the tongue, perhaps.

Young King Brady could not keep back a chuckle.

Billy looked a little foolish, but he showed himself manly about it, too.

"Oh, it's all right, pop!" he exclaimed. "Minnie and I understand each other. We had fixed things up before you were captured. We are going to be married when we are through with this job."

"Married!" cried Mr. Bassett. "My son married to the daughter of my worst enemy! This is too much!"

"What difference if Billy and I love each other?" flashed Minnie. "Am I showing myself your enemy now?"

Mr. Bassett was silenced.

Perhaps he was a bit smitten with the pretty face and lively ways of Minnie, too.

They now found themselves in a small cave, where a man with a rifle lay sound asleep.

It was one of the guards fixed by Minnie.



"Pay no attention to him," she said, hastily. "I'll be back in a minute. I must know who these people are."

She was soon back with the report that Happy Jack Hyer and his men had just gone by.

The coast was now clear.

Minnie led the way on down the mountain.

A little later and they were sweeping over the desert trail with the lights of Badtown in the distance.

"Now you don't need me any longer," said Young King Brady. "Let me get down and go back and look after my partner."

But Mr. Bassett would not hear of it.

Young King Brady saw that the Boston man did not trust his men now, so he determined to see him safe at Badtown, and then get a horse and return to look up the old detective alone.

Meanwhile Old King Brady and Mr. Mellor were coming slowly down the mountain.

It is no joke to sit on a horse behind a drunken man and guide the animal down a steep incline.

"I am almost sorry I gave him that last drink of whisky," thought Old King Brady. "If he don't kill himself before we reach the foot of the mountain it will be a wonder. Ha! What have we now?"

He had just caught the sound of Happy Jack's approaching band.

There was no chance for Old King Brady to dodge.

He knew nothing about the caves on the mountain trail.

But the shrewd old detective was prepared to face the music in his own way.

He had restored his false chin whiskers. He was Judge Izard's double again, and mighty glad of it he was when he saw Happy Jack ahead of his band winding up the trail.

"Mellor! Mellor! Do you hear me?" the detective called, in his prisoner's ear.

"I—hic—I hear you, Judge. What the—hic—what the blazes do you want?"

"Happy Jack is coming. Don't you give me away unless you want me to send a ball through the back of your head."

"All right, Judge; all right. That's right. Let's have 'nother ball."

"He's far gone!" thought Old King Brady, "and I am up against it now."

"Hello! What is all this?" cried Happy Jack, reining in as they approached.

"It's boss Mellor. He made me tie him on the horse and start for Badtown," replied Old King Brady, imitating Judge Izard's voice.

Mellor was clean gone.

All he could remember was that he and Judge Izard had something to attend to, and he wanted no one to interfere.

"Mind yer own business, Jack Hyer," he muttered, thickly. "Go on, Judge; go on."

"Well, I'll be blamed. He's jagged for fair!" cried Hyer.

"You've got your hands full, Judge."

"I have to do as I'm told," said Old King Brady, inno-

cently. "He's got the gambling fever on him, and to Badtown he will go."

"Let him," growled Happy Jack. "There's no other way. Of course you'll stick to him, Judge, till he gets straight."

"Oh, yes," replied Old King Brady.

They passed the outlaws, and rode on.

Once at the foot of the mountain trail Old King Brady put spurs to his horse.

Again and again he looked back as they dashed on.

Mellor was asleep. He reeled from side to side, but did not fall.

He was well used to riding a horse drunk and asleep, and Old King Brady had tied him well.

"Happy Jack will find the judge, and he'll follow me," thought Old King Brady. "There is bound to be trouble yet."

Once more he looked behind him.

This time he knew that trouble was close at hand.

A big band of men had just come down off the Dome Rock trail.

They could be plainly seen in the moonlight dashing across the desert.

"Get on! Get on!" shouted Old King Brady, digging his heels into his horse's flanks.

Faster and faster still he flew, and yet when Old King Brady looked back next time he saw that Happy Jack's band were gaining on him.

And there was nothing ahead but Badtown.

Even if the brave old detective succeeded in reaching it ahead of the gang, what hope was there of help in that lawless Arizona town?

"Halt! Who comes here?"

Young King Brady's party had just passed the smelting works when from behind the big buildings which were located on both sides of the road a dozen mounted men suddenly rode out into view, and spread themselves across the street.

"Well, well, boys!" cried one who seemed to be a leader, "nothing very startling in these people. I reckon we have made a mistake."

"I reckon you hain't," spoke up another. "That gal is Matt Mellor's daughter, and these are some of the band."

"Rats!" cried the first speaker, looking at Mr. Bassett. "This gent her is no outlaw; as for the others, they are only a couple of boys!"

"Who might you be, sir?" asked Young King Brady. "I want to say a word to the leader here."

"I'm the leader," said the man. "My name is Brown. I'm the sheriff of this county. We are out for Happy Jack Hyer and one Matt Mellor, all outlaws. Mellor has stolen a mine from a Boston man named Bassett, who has had some correspondence with me, and——"

"I am Mr. Bassett," broke in that individual.

"My name is Brady, sheriff," added Harry. "I am the partner of Old King Brady, the detective. I am very glad



to meet you. We have just escaped from Matt Mellor's clutches, thanks to the kindness of this brave girl."

"Well, well," cried the sheriff. "This is luck. We were sent for by the Mayor of Badtown, on account of the trouble here. It is, however, sure that Happy Jack's gang fired the hotel the other night. They have been committing outrages of one kind and another all along the line, and——"

"Sheriff!" broke in one of the men. "Look there!"

The man pointed off over the desert.

Far in the distance a horse upon which two men rode could be seen in the moonlight dashing madly forward.

Behind, at a good distance away, a band of twenty or more men were following them.

"It's the governor! It's Old King Brady, and I know it. He has captured Matt Mellor, and is being chased by Happy Jack and his men!"

"By gracious! I believe you are right, young fellow!" exclaimed the sheriff, after taking a long look through a powerful night glass which he produced. "This is our game."

"Pop!" spoke up Billy Bassett, "I am going to ride on with Minnie. You have no use for us here."

"Go," said Mr. Bassett. "As for you, young lady, I thank you for what you have done to-night, and I will not ask you to be present at your father's capture, if that is what is coming next."

"Well, are you saying anything?" demanded Billy, menacingly.

"I am saying nothing against it," replied Mr. Bassett. "You have been a wild boy, Billy. Perhaps this may steady you. Do as you please."

Billy and Minnie rode on into Badtown, leaving the sheriff and his posse to wonder what this mysterious talk was all about.

The sheriff raised his night glass again.

"They'll overhaul them two on that horse about here," he said. "Boys, I guess we'd better go in hiding again."

"Let me go forward," cried Harry. "I can take no chances."

"You are taking the biggest kind of chances if you do," said the sheriff.

"Go! Stand by your partner, Brady," cried Mr. Bassett, slipping off his horse.

Young King Brady waited for nothing further, but went dashing over the plain.

It was a wild ride for Old King Brady.

Not for years had the brave old detective undertaken anything which so terribly taxed his strength.

Matt Mellor was now perfectly helpless.

He had fallen forward and clutched the horse's neck desperately.

It is doubtful if he realized what was going on.

Every instant the outlaws were gaining upon them.

What was worse, Old King Brady's horse—it was the same old plug he had bought in Badtown—was showing signs of fatigue.

"My life isn't worth two cents if Happy Jack comes up

with me," thought Old King Brady, "and that's what he is going to do before I can get into Badtown. Hello! Who is coming now? What does this mean?"

A mounted man had just emerged from the dark shadows of the smelting works away on ahead.

He rode furiously over the desert toward the detective.

But Happy Jack and his gang were riding just as fast up behind.

"It's Harry, by gracious!" gasped Old King Brady at last.

The words had barely escaped him when his horse stumbled and fell helpless with a broken leg.

A wild shout went up from the outlaws.

Young King Brady heard and saw them in the moonlight.

Three minutes later he came darting up to the side of his chief.

"Hurt, governor?" he cried.

"Not a bit."

"And it's Matt Mellor?"

"As you see."

"Do we leave him or try to take him?"

"To take him is impossible. I have all the papers—everything that is of any value. We must save ourselves."

A rattle of rifle shots came then.

They were away out of range, and the shots fell short.

Back into Badtown the detectives dashed, closely followed by Happy Jack's gang.

Once past the smelting works they halted, wheeled around and faced the foe.

That was the danger moment.

The shots whistled past their heads.

Then all at once the sheriff's posse dashed out upon the scene from the shelter of the smelting works and opened fire in which the Bradys joined.

"Shoot to kill! Shoot to kill!" yelled the sheriff. "Show no quarter here!"

It was an exciting moment, but the next brought the end.

Then Happy Jack, Randy Kelton, Spanish Pete and others of the outlaws lay dead and wounded in the road, along with three of the sheriff's men, while the others scattered over the desert, and were off like the wind.

"We have won the game, Mr. Bassett," said Old King Brady. "Here are all Mellor's papers relating to the Eureka Mine, and Mellor himself lies dead drunk back on the plain."

"Why, who are you?" demanded the Boston man. "I never saw you before."

Off came the hat, the wig and false whiskers.

"Only Old King Brady!" Harry cried.

"Oh! Ah! Indeed! This is very interesting!" exclaimed the Boston man. "But it is only what I expected, for the Bradys never fail!"

No; the Bradys never fail, and they had brought their Badtown case to a successful finish, and had won in the fight for the gold mine.



A week later found the Bradys back in New York.

They left Mr. Bassett at Badtown, with Matt Mellor securely jailed, and young Billy married to his daughter, and in full charge of the Eureka Mine. Happy Jack was dead, and the gang all broken up. From that time forward Badtown became a very respectable place.

Mr. Bassett rewarded the Bradys liberally.

During the next year the Eureka Mine proved immensely rich.

Other mines were started in the Dome Rock Range, the region having now become safe to operate in.

The smelting works have doubled their business since Matt Mellor went to the penitentiary and Happy Jack Hyer's band was cleaned out.

Up around the Dome Rock Range everything is booming, and the people there will tell you that this favorable change was all the result of the brave work of the Bradys in Badtown.

THE END.

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